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2021 Northstar Place · Landfall

Located in Lakeside Villas in Landfall's sought after 1st phase, this all brick residence features an open floor plan with 2 bedrooms including spacious master on the 1st floor and additional bed and bath over the garage. The updated kitchen features stainless Thermador appliances. **$549,000**

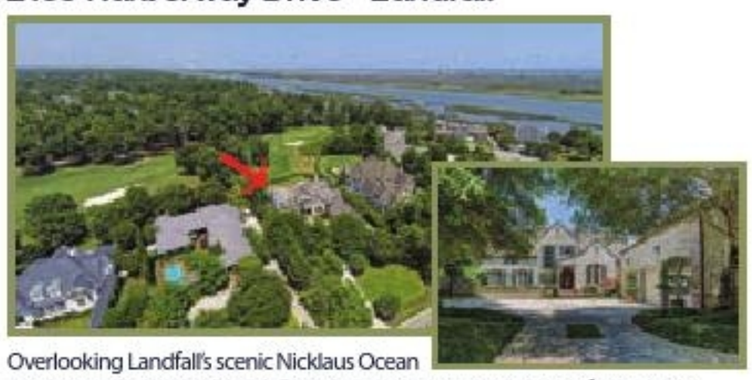
1709 Fontenay Place · Landfall

Located near the Eastwood entrance to Landfall, this 3 bedroom, 3.5 bath townhouse style condominium is ready to move right in. Enjoy being able to bike to Wrightsville Beach, walk the Summer Rest Trail or spin around the Loop from this convenient location. **$559,000**

2220 Moreland Drive · Landfall

Quality built by Steven Dunn Fine Homes, this all brick residence is located at the end of a quiet cul-de-sac overlooking scenic Landfall Lake and the mile-long walking trail with views of the ICW and Wrightsville Beach. **$1,199,000**

2135 Harborway Drive · Landfall



Overlooking Landfall's scenic Nicklaus Ocean #2, this quality built all brick French Country inspired design features an open floor plan with 2 bedrooms on the 1st floor, including a spacious master. The upstairs floor plan can accommodate a family or offices for stay at home parents. **$1,199,900**

2029 Balmoral Place · Landfall

Sited on a gently sloping, wooded bluff overlooking Landfall's Howe Creek (with tidal creek access for the nature lover), this all-brick, quality built home by Blanton Building features an open floor plan with 10 ft ceilings and generous rooms. **$1,295,000**

1008 Turnberry Place · Landfall

Golf and Intracoastal Waterway views abound from nearly every room in this hill top brick residence. Located on one of Landfall's premiere addresses, Turnberry Place, this home is surrounded by inspiring natural beauty and stunning architecture. **$1,349,000**

2229 Masons Point Place · Landfall

Beautifully sited atop one of Landfall's highest waterfront bluffs, this Nick Garrett built house directly overlooks Howe Creek with views of the ICW and the Atlantic. This custom shake and stone coastal design features an open floor plan with oversized windows and extensive decks. **$1,485,000**

1800 Eastwood Road #178 · Lions Gate Townhomes

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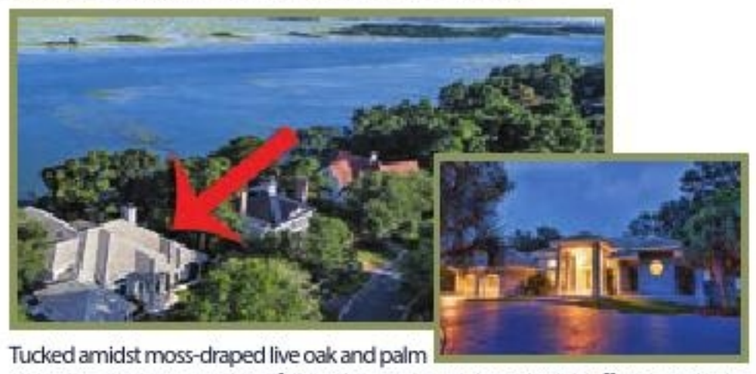
7405 Nautica Yacht Club Drive · Mason Harbor Yacht Club

This home checks all the boxes! Quality-built, new construction, 30 ft boat slip, small/friendly neighborhood with waterfront clubhouse and pool. An open floor plan includes 4 bedrooms, 3.5 baths with lots of covered porches and large windows to bring the sunshine in! **$870,793**

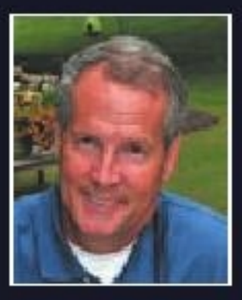
2328 Ocean Point Drive · Landfall



Tucked amidst moss-draped live oak and palm trees, this contemporary Landfall residence is located on a high bluff and overlooks the Intracoastal Waterway and offers some of our area's best views: the rolling surf of Mason's Inlet between Wrightsville Beach and Figure Eight Island. **$1,775,000**

2111 South Churchill Drive · Highland Hills

Located in the heart of mid town's South Oleander neighborhood with easy access to New Hanover Regional Medical Complex and Cape Fear Country Club, this elegantly appointed painted brick Georgian home has been meticulously updated. **$1,195,000**



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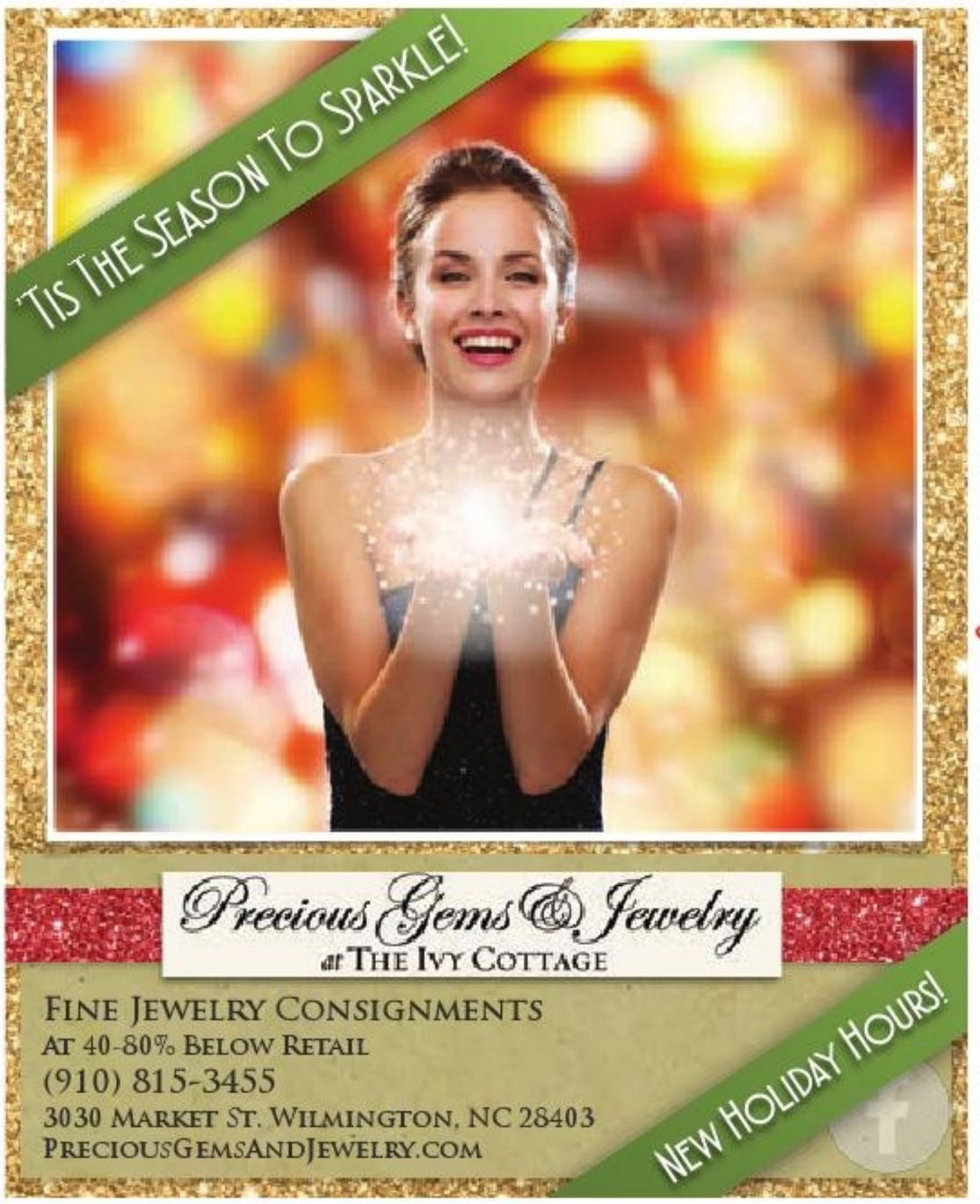

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GIVING OR RECEIVING A MOST PRECIOUS GIFT...

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The Winter Issue 2016

Next month, look for our new Winter Issue that combines our January and February content into a single jam-packed special issue that celebrates the best of winter in Wilmington and the Cape Fear.

All your favorite writers and photographers will be here – along with some nice surprises for your fireside reading!

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– *Jim Dodson*, Editor

Cover Photograph by Ned Leary

The Ivy Cottage

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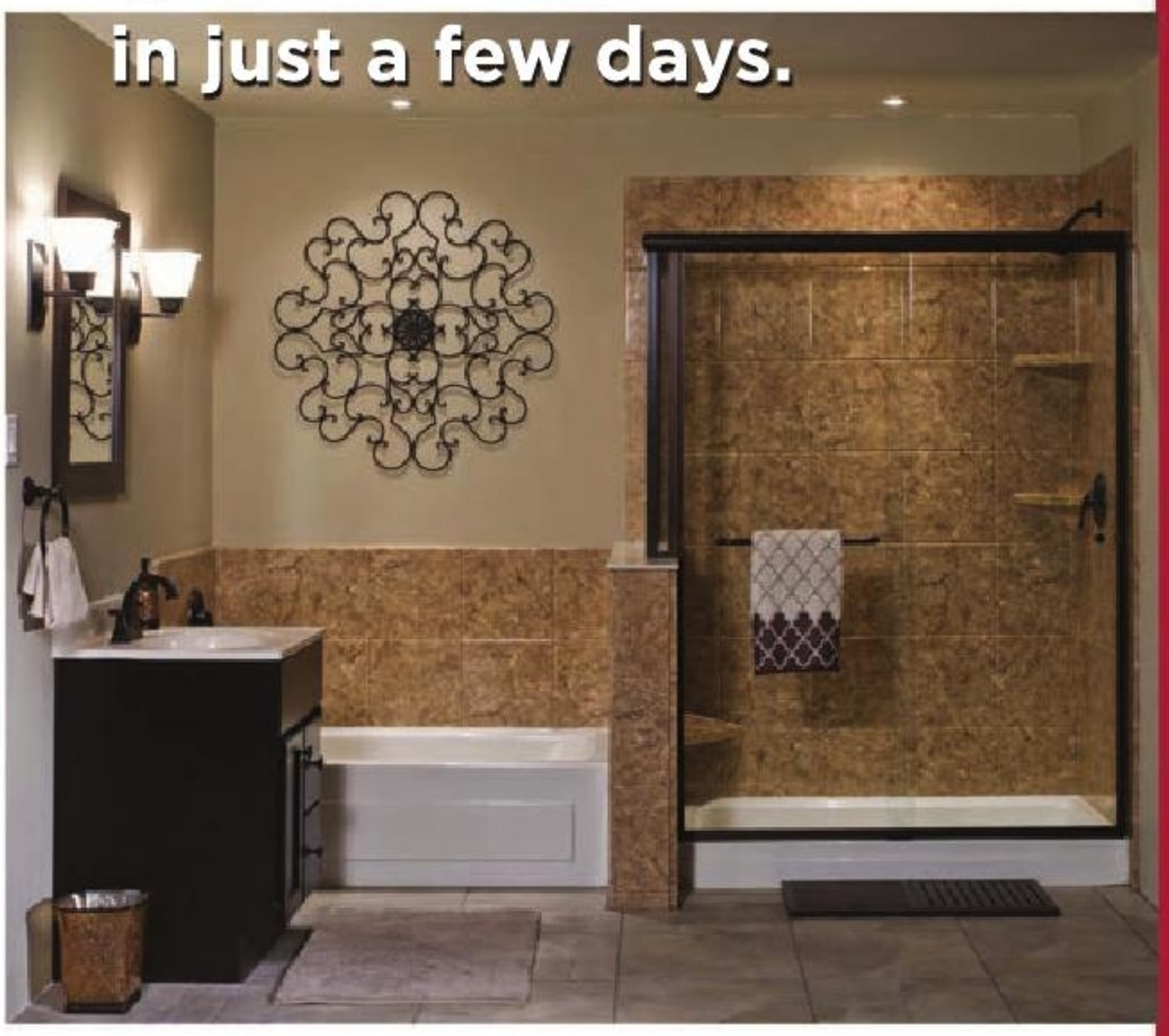

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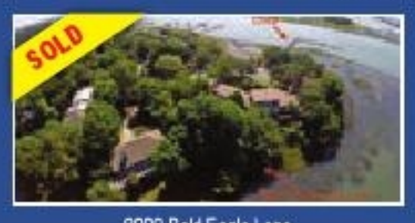

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Emma's Bittersweet

By Jim Dodson

Where you come

from, someone once said, is half of knowing who you are.

I come from rural Carolinians, farmers and a sprinkling of small town preachers, people of the soil and The Book. One half of my family were Southern Baptists, the other half Methodists. "Everyone starts out a Southern Baptist," an uncle once pointed out to me, ". . . what those that's been messed with."

I suppose my older brother and I were messed with. We grew up in a Lutheran church in Greensboro, sons of an itinerate newspaperman who hauled his family on a tour of Dixie before coming home for good to Greensboro. That was December of 1959.

One of the first things we did was take a road trip over to Buckhorn Road in Hillsborough to visit my dad's great elderly maiden aunts, Josie and Ida, spinsters in their upper 80s who still lived in the log house their father built after his return from the Civil War. The house was about a mile from Dodson's Crossroads.

In almost every respect these were ladies from another century. They wore long simple wool dresses and tall laced-up boots and sweaters they had knitted. Their four-room house had only a few bare-bulb ceiling lights because they much preferred to read their Bibles by oil lamps and heat by a woodstove I never saw sitting idle. They weren't without modern conveniences, however, including an elderly slope-shouldered Frigidaire and a large old-fashioned radio that hummed when you turned it on, always tuned to old-timey gospel music. Water came from a hand pump in the kitchen sink. But each aunt had her own distinctively marked outhouse. Josie's had a elegantly carved half moon hanging on its door; Ida's a star.

My dad called them the "Moon and Star Girls."

As best I can recall, we took them each a Whitman's Christmas Sampler and new wool socks that first December visit. They were thrilled to receive these modest gifts. We also took them out to Sunday lunch at the fancy Colonial Inn in Hillsborough. You might have thought we'd taken them to the governor's mansion.

It was that first lunch, or maybe during the many Sunday afternoon visits we had with them over subsequent years, that Josie the Moon Girl — the more talkative one — first told my brother and me that a man named George Washington Tate, our dad's great-grandfather, had not only surveyed many of the central counties of the state following the Civil War but also established several Methodist churches from north of Durham to the western hills.

Eventually another story came out as well. This one had an aura of mystery around it. During one of his horseback rides to spread the Gospel out west, according to family lore, he brought back an orphaned Indian infant girl he adopted and named Emma Tate. Quite possibly she was either Cherokee or Catawba, though her name was simply entered into the family Bible and county registry as the fifth child of George Washington Tate, the only daughter of one of the county's most important figures. Her grave's headstone in the Chestnut Ridge United Methodist Church burying ground near Hillsborough simply notes her birth and death as March 6, 1858 and June 9, 1928, respectively.

Emma grew up to marry Jimmy Dodson of Buckhorn Road, a horse farmer and dandy who played the fiddle at local dances and reportedly did little else if he could get away with it, according to Ida the Star Girl, the no-nonsense sister who always chopped the heads off the chickens and did most of the heavy work around their farm.

Aunt Emma, as folks along Buckhorn Road called her, gave Jimmy Dodson four sons and two daughters, the oldest being my grandfather, Walter. He was an unusually quiet fellow and rural polymath who could make anything with his hands, grew up to become a master carpenter and, among other things, worked on crews with his younger brother Jerome raising the first electrical towers around the state, the two of them later helping to wire the Jefferson Standard building in Greensboro, the state's second "skyscraper."

Over the course of her life, Walter's mother, Aunt Emma, gained a reputation as a gifted natural healer who gathered her medicines from the fields around the family home place, where my dad spent some of the happiest summers of his life helping Uncle Jimmy with the horses and Aunt Emma in the garden. It took me years to realize why he connected so powerfully with the outdoors and Indian lore.

Not long after that first December visit with Josie and Ida, we went in search of the homeplace and found it a mile or more off Buckhorn Road, evidently long abandoned, its front porch sagging, windows broken, surrounded by a grove of

magnificent oak trees that bore garlands of mistletoe. My father used his shotgun to shoot the mistletoe out of the trees, recalling stories of his many summers on that property. We also collected bittersweet for our front door wreath.

For several years we returned every December to gather bittersweet and shoot mistletoe. Eventually we learned why the old place was abandoned, our family's darkest secret. After her children were grown and gone, Aunt Emma committed suicide by hanging herself from a rafter of a room Uncle Jimmy was building on the rear of the house. No one knew why. The room was never finished. Uncle Jimmy lived another fifteen years but rarely in his own house.

My dad's theory about this tragedy was that she simply wearied of trying to live with one foot planted in two worlds, an Indian lady with a white woman's name and a good time Jimmy for a husband. Dad had no doubt whatsoever about his grandmother's native origins, for no one probably knew her better.

I always wished I could see a photograph of Aunt Emma, but — tellingly — no one in the family seemed to possess one of her, only wonderful memories of her kindness, strength and earthy wisdom deepening the mystery. If she was indeed Native American, perhaps this explains her reluctance to be photographed. Some Indians believed a photographic image robbed their souls of vitality.

My dad, in any case, tried to buy the family homeplace for years. But the property had already passed from our clan's hands to a developer, who eventually built an upscale subdivision on the land. Though he never said as much, I always thought my father's biggest — maybe only — disappointment in life was failing to get his hands on that old home place.

Every December since, whenever I go in search of bittersweet and sprigs of mistletoe for our front door and Christmas tree, I think about Aunt Emma and how, in the nicest sort of way, this remarkable woman is my Ghost of Christmas Past.

Not long ago, my wife, Wendy, and I spent an enchanting evening with my dad's first cousin, Roger Dodson, and his lovely wife, Polly. Roger is the son of my grandfather's younger brother, Jerome, and, also Emma's grandson. Like many of the Dodsons, Roger is a man of faith and flying machines. My father and two of his four brothers became Air Force pilots and flew during the war. Roger, a bit younger, trained as an air cadet in Greensboro, built his own airplane and joined the Air Force during the Korean War. He and Polly later became missionaries in New Guinea and raised their four children, two girls and two boys, in some exciting faraway places, flying everywhere to distribute Bibles.

"It was a great experience for our family," Roger explained. "A real adventure for us all."

Though they were fifteen years apart in age, Roger was one of my dad's favorite cousins, and I shouldn't have been surprised he knew so many of the same stories I'd heard about Aunt Emma. Jimmy Dodson, in fact, lived with Uncle Jerome's family for a time before his passing in 1942.

"Jimmy was a real character, all right. Unfortunately, I was too young to know Emma," Roger explained over a delicious homemade supper. "But it's my strong belief that the love of hard work and interest in helping people many Dodson men have comes directly from Aunt Emma. There was always that mystery about her death, always the quiet talk about an Indian in the family. But those who knew her sure did love her. What a gift."

Cousin Roger smiled, powerfully reminding me of my late father.

He added almost casually, "Polly and I have been cleaning out some drawers and going through family scrapbooks and papers. We recently found a photograph of Emma Tate, the only one I know of. Would you like to see it?"

After all these years to finally place a human face to a woman who has been such a large and mysterious part of my life was an incalculable gift, the ultimate Christmas gift.

There's very little mystery left.

As Roger agreed, something about her eyes tells you the bittersweet stories must all be true.

Contact editor Jim Dodson at jim@saltmagazinenc.com.

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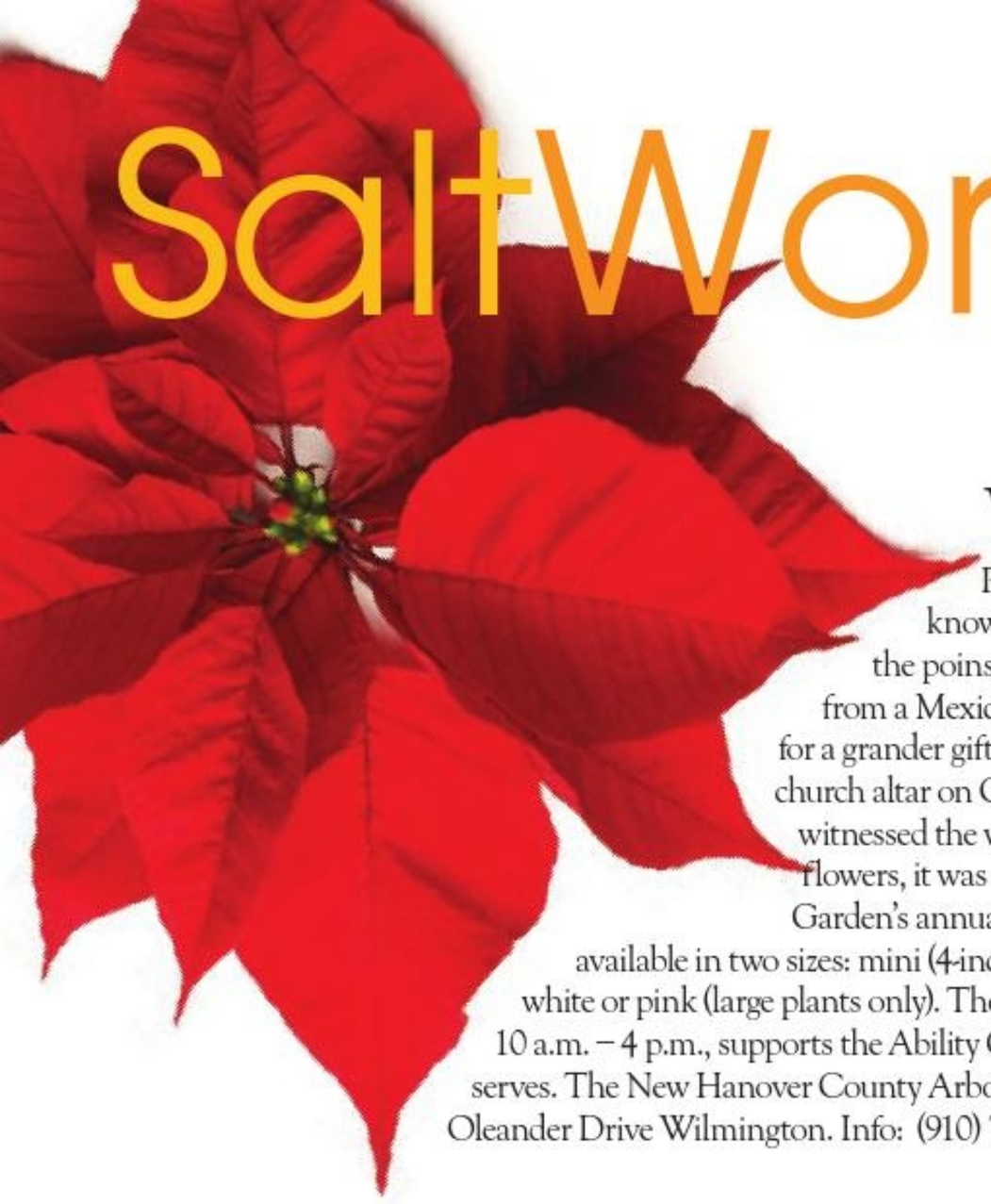

Winter Rose

Poinsettias! Get your poinsettias! Also known as the Christmas flower, it's said that the poinsettia's association with Christmas comes from a Mexican legend of a child who, with no means for a grander gift, gathered roadside weeds to place at the church altar on Christmas Eve. When the congregation witnessed the weeds turn into brilliant red and green flowers, it was a Christmas miracle. At the Ability Garden's annual poinsettia sale, the holiday flowers are available in two sizes: mini (4-inch pot, $4) or large (8-inch pot, $16); in red, white or pink (large plants only). The sale, which runs December 7–10, from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., supports the Ability Garden's programs and local citizens it serves. The New Hanover County Arboretum, Ability Garden Greenhouse, 6206 Oleander Drive Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7660 or arboretum.nhcgov.com

Tenor Loving Care

On Thursday, January 14, from 6:30–8 p.m., Jazz at the CAM presents tenor saxophonist Serena Wiley with The Light Under the Sun – three emerging musical artists who deliver jazz, hip hop, spoken word and rhythm and blues like you've never heard it before. In three words: lively, uplifting, incomparable. In other words: Don't miss it. Admission: $12; $8 (members); $5 (students). Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

Courtly Holiday Tea

Chamber Music Wilmington's holiday salon pairs bubbly tipples, courtly teas and delectables from King George's Kensington Palace, Marie Antoinette's Versailles, and Frederick the Great's Prussian Court with a selection of the royals' favorite sonatas, diversions, airs and dances. Selections from Bach, Chédeville, Telemann, Handel and more performed by the Beverly Biggs Baroque Trio on Sunday, December 13, from 4–6 p.m. Tickets: $65; $50/members. RSVP by Friday, December 11. The Graystone Inn, 100 South Third Street, Wilmington. Info: (330) 204-9733. Tickets: cmwreservations@gmail.com.

By the Dozen

The third annual "12 Tastes of Christmas" benefit for the Cape Fear Literacy Council happens on Friday, December 11, from 7–9 p.m. Yep, a dozen festive food and drink pairings from area pubs, bars, breweries, cafes and eateries, including The Blind Elephant, PinPoint, Palate, Caprice Bistro, Flytrap Brewing, Chops Deli, Wilmington Brewing Company, Yosake, Delish NC, Goat & Compass, Detour Deli, Twist & Stout, Costellos, Soulful Twist and Duck & Dive. Sure to be another sell-out. Tickets: $30. Brooklyn Arts Center, 516 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-2939 or www.brooklynartsnc.com.

Grandeur and Opulence

Wilmington Ballet Company's *Nutcracker* premieres at the Cape Fear Community College Humanities and Fine Arts Center on Saturday, December 19, and Sunday, December 20, at 3 p.m. Featuring guest artists from Atlanta Ballet and Carolina Ballet, a cast of 250, over 600 ornate costumes, a rousing live-action battle scene, a 20-foot Chinese dragon, and real magic. Tickets: $15–35. CFCC Humanities and Fine Arts Center, 703 North Third Street, Wilmington. Info: cfcc.edu/capefearstage.

When In Rome

TheatreNOW's indulgent New Year's Eve celebration, "Bacchanalia!", is as good as it gets: a four-course meal paired with contemporary variety acts. We're talking flame and aerial performers, live music and comedy, plus party favors and a celebratory champagne toast. Menu includes velvety seafood bisque with pastry croutons, gourmet baby greens with roasted shallot and truffle vinaigrette, three delectable main courses to choose from, and a 24-karat-gold-dusted dessert so elaborate it can only be described as a "chocolate extravaganza." Wine, revels, joy and drama? Check, check, check and check. Seatings at 6 and 9:30 p.m. Doors open thirty minutes prior to each seating. Tickets: $85/individual; $160/couple. TheatreNOW, 19 South Tenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-3669 or www.theatrewilmington.com.

Eat, Drink & Be Married

Contrary to what reality shows like *Bridezillas* continue to project into the cosmos, or what you may have heard your crotchety Aunt Gertrude grumble when you announced your engagement, planning a wedding should be fun. On Saturday, January 16, from 4–8 p.m., engaged couples are invited to experience Courtyards & Cobblestones, a creative wedding event and walking tour that features seven fully styled downtown venues and a hand-picked assemblage of over seventy innovative wedding professionals from all over southeastern North Carolina. Featured venues include 128 South, The Atrium, Bakery 105, Brooklyn Arts Center, City Club at de Rosset, The Loft on Front and Saint Thomas Preservation Hall. Eat, drink and get ready for wedding season. Tickets/Info: www.courtyardsandcobblestones.com.

'Tis the Season

This month, The Theatre Exchange will transport Charles Dickens' timeless tale of Christmas redemption from Victorian England to a Depression-era "Hooverville" peppered with THCPA Executive Director Tony Rivenbark's inimitable "Bah! Humbug!" *A Christmas Carol* runs Thursday, December 10, through Sunday, December 20; Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 7 p.m.; Saturdays and Sundays at 2 p.m.; with a final showing on Monday, December 21, 7 p.m., at Stein Studio Theatre. Tickets: $25. In the spirit of holiday classics shaped by divine intervention, Frank Capra's iconic film *It's A Wonderful Life* will be shown on Thalian's big screen on Tuesday, December 22, at 7 p.m. Tickets: $10. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: www.thalianhall.org.

Santa's Little Helper

In 1992, when writer and humorist David Sedaris first read his essay "Santaland Diaries" on NPR's "Morning Edition," Sedaris and Crumpet became household names. This month, Panache Theatrical Productions presents *Santaland Diaries* at the Red Barn Studio Theatre on Friday, December 4, through Sunday, December 20, at 8 p.m. The story, adapted by Joe Mantello, chronicles the misadventures of a disgruntled elf named Crumpet during his brief stint at Macy's popular holiday attraction. Anthony Lawson as Crumpet and the "not ready for Christmas" carolers will deliver the charged, politically incorrect, impudent commentaries that stole our curmudgeonly hearts over two decades ago. As narrated by Sedaris, who really did spend a season at Macy's wearing "green velvet knickers and a perky little hat" decorated with sequins: "Today I witnessed fist fights and vomiting and magnificent tantrums." You'll witness equal splendor. Tickets: $15. Red Barn Studio Theatre, 1122 South Third Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-1788 or www.thalian.org.

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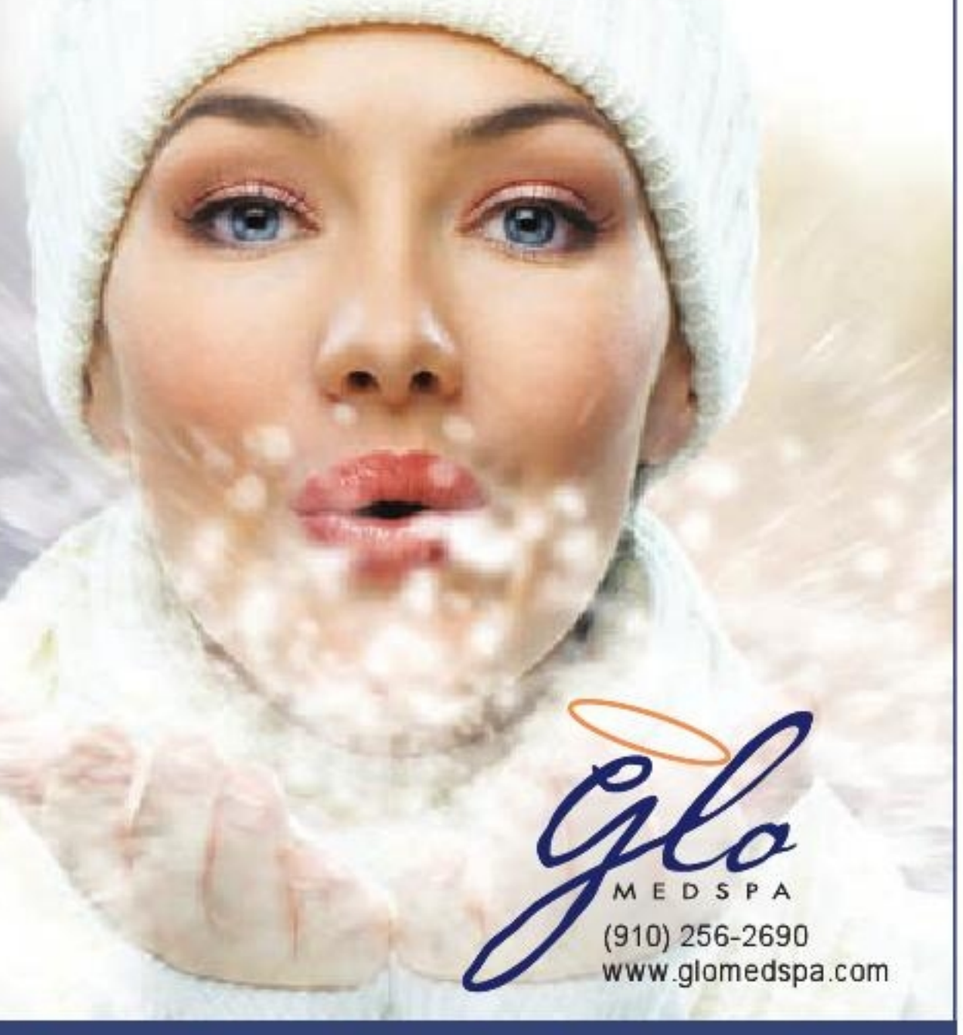

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Holiday Survival Tips

(as edited by a Local Lawyer)

Keep To Your Regular Routine. *Sleep in until 11, shuffle to the fridge, pour a drink, nap by 11:45. Surf internet, shuffle to fridge, stare listlessly, pour another drink, shuffle back to couch, repeat.*

Don't Isolate. *But if you do, alone, surrounded by cats, empty bags of nacho chips and binge watching Netflix in the same pajamas you've had on for four days, it's okay. Just don't make it five.*

Don't Engage In Arguments. *Even if your dad insists on espousing the benefits of voting a certain unfortunately coiffed candidate into office, or worse: your ex shows up for dinner with a new girlfriend young enough to be born during Clinton's term.*

Stay Connected. *To wifi. Because let's admit it, sending awkward pictures when Uncle Bill passes out in the Christmas tree to your equally miserable best friend really is the best kind of kindred communion.*

Don't Feel Guilty. *It's true: Science has proven that there are no calories in sweet potatoes, chestnut stuffing or egg nog.*

Ask For Help. *From the too smart for his own good neighbor kid to back you up on the Santa thing. Just because your children caught you moving that infuriating elf on the shelf, you shouldn't lose access to one of the best ways to coerce good behavior for a week or two.*

Be Good To Yourself. *It's the holidays. They're always a little (or a lot) insane. Don't scream at your spouse for mouth breathing. Don't ignore your mother's calls. Laugh with your kids. Eat more than you should. Relax.*

Remember You're An Adult. *But sometimes sitting at the children's table is the best way to enjoy a holiday meal. No need to be stuffy or uptight: watching little Timmy shove peas up his nose is much better than witnessing Uncle Bill remove his dentures in order to really enjoy the casserole.*

*If you are truly unhappy during the holidays, or the victim of domestic abuse, there is help. The National Domestic Violence Hotline is (800) 799-HELP. While this advertisement is meant to be lighthearted, there's nothing funny about abuse. For exceptional legal advice and a free consultation call us: we are here to help you.

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Wonder Is the Medium

A young artist discovers the thrill of letting go

By Ashley Wahl

The last time 11-year-old Zyana Gerson was in the Brown Wing at Cameron Art Museum, it looked different.

"Where is Hiroshi's art?" she asks, orbiting around various assemblages, one of which resembles a miniature sideshow complete with metallic pygmy mermaid tail.

The shiny scales catch her eye, but this girl is on a mission.

She flits from one display to the next, whirling past a vibrant collection of modernist prints. The yellow feathers dangling from her headband stir the air above her left shoulder.

"Where is the meditation room?"

Last summer, while enrolled in the Hands-On Clay Camp at The Museum School, Zyana explored *Matter of Reverence*, a retrospective exhibition featuring the works of local potter Hiroshi Sueyoshi. She studied the muted color palette of the artist's bowls and vases — how color and form could create a sense of serenity. She admired the hand-sculpted rocks in his Zen garden installation, aka, the meditation room. And months later, on this particular Wednesday afternoon, the Murray Middle School sixth-grader recalls this space as it was back then, makes it known that she wishes Hiroshi's work was still here, then walks through the Brown Wing again, this time stopping in front of a collage by Cuban-American artist José Bernal.

"That's beast," she says, studying the glamorous woman in the red floppy hat and the black-and-white nude goddess balancing on the brim and bow.

Beast as in wicked.

Wicked as in sweet.

Sweet as in cool.

**

As a young artist dabbling in the malleable word of clay, Zyana is beginning to understand that nothing is permanent — and that letting go of her work can be as thrilling as the creation process. Especially when she can put a price tag on it.

During her time in The Museum School's Youth Studio, young Zyana began making 3-D roses by stamping out clay circles, biscuit-style, arranging them like knocked-down dominoes, then rolling them, she says, the way you would roll up a sleeping bag.

She hasn't stopped making them since.

At home, Zyana has over a dozen clay roses and is in the process of creating more. She paints them with soft colors that remind her of happiness. Glazing and firing happen at Fat Cat Pottery.

In the spring, she plans to sell her roses for five or six bucks a pop at the LEAF Festival in Black Mountain, North Carolina.

"I'd rather go there than Disney World," says Zyana of the four-day music and arts festival.

Why?

"The drum circles and fire dancing," she says, brown eyes filled with wonder. "Being one with nature and spending time with my family. The camping . . . the art."

**

After walking through *Obra de Arte* and *The Eye Learns*, the two exhibitions that took the place of *Hiroshi Sueyoshi: Matter of Reverence*, Zyana makes her way to CAM's Hughes Wing to check out an interactive collection called *Response is the Medium*.

She explores, counter-clockwise, starting with a pair of neon floor projections with patterns that change when a viewer walks across them.

Zyana jumps, dances, ultimately rolls around on the floor.

Next, she approaches a metal frame from which 200 translucent plastic orbs hang like beaded curtains. When she touches one, it glows blue and makes the sound of a Tibetan singing bowl. She activates another, which chimes like a grandfather clock. Before long, she discovers that each orb, illuminated by touch, generates a different tone.

Within minutes, she is enveloped in a symphony of color and sound.

"It feels like a meditation," says the young artist.

She lets the composition fall silent, wanders over to the next installation — becomes a part of it.

**

Next year, long after this exhibit is gone, Zyana plans to spend more time in the studio at CAM.

And what kind of clay creations are up her sleeve next?

"I would like to create something unique from everyone else that sets me apart," she says. "A shoe plant holder, perhaps. I have so many ideas to explore . . ."

One thing's certain: The artist is following her passion. Her journey will be beast.

Our spy, senior editor Ashley Wahl, is prone to wander.

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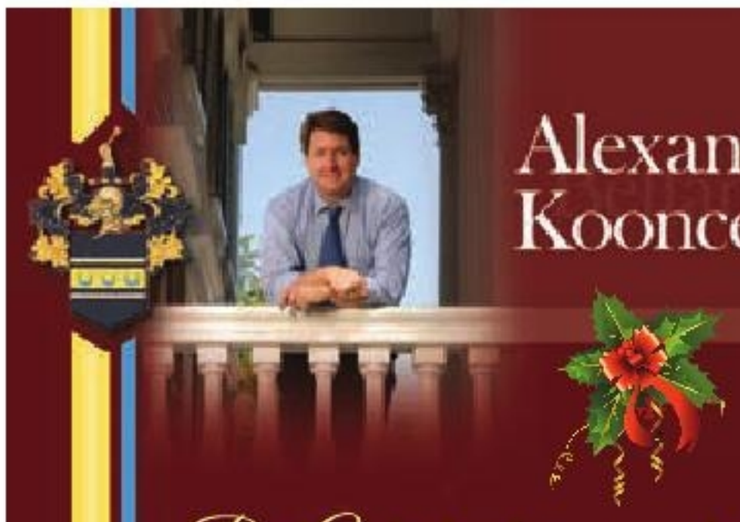

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Kristen Brogdon

Seasoned by years at the Kennedy Center and Second City, UNCW's new Director of the Office of the Arts promises an expanded outlook as a twentieth anniversary looms

By Gwenyfar Rohler

"You'll hear me say 'yes, and' a lot. That's one of the things I learned from Second City."

Kristen Brogdon, director of the newly formed Office of the Arts at UNCW, drops this comment lightly in a discussion about artist residencies and collaborations. It is, actually, an incredibly revealing statement about her. Aside from her collaborative and proactive attitude about life in general, and the arts in particular, we also learn about her time in Chicago, home of Second City, the world's leading comedy theater and school of improvisation. If improvisation performance can be boiled down to any one tenet, it is this: You accept the ball that has been thrown to you, add something workable to it, and throw it to the next person. Sum it up with "yes, and." Second City partners with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, where Brogdon served as deputy administrative director for the last eight years.

"I was at the Kennedy Center for nine years, and that is a great place to start your career," says Brogdon, who blends charm and appreciation with a supportive nature to create a sense of leadership that is almost the Pied Piper of Hamelin: You realize that you would go along with anything she suggests. Thankfully, she seems to have real vision and a clear, definable rubric for decision making. "It's amazing in terms of resources and the caliber of artists we were working with, and I really got a great launchpad there," she explains.

After nearly a decade, however, Brogdon's natural curiosity and creative spirit began to hunger. During a conversation with her former boss from the Kennedy Center, she mentioned that she was starting to yearn for something different. "I called him and said, 'I'm starting to think about what comes next. What do you think?' and he said, 'I'm moving to Chicago to run this company, and you should come with me.'" Brogdon agreed to come visit as a scouting mission for the Kennedy Center because Hubbard Street Dance hadn't been at the Kennedy Center in fifteen years. Clearly she liked what she saw. "I fell in love with everything about it," she confirms, and in 2007 she accepted a job in the administration of Hubbard Street. "Within a year the bottom fell out of the market and everything." Brogdon shakes her head, eyes heavenward. She recounts the entrepreneurial spirit in the Hubbard Street organization that looked loss in the face and created opportunity: "We decided that we were going to create a youth program. There had never been an opportunity for dancers under the age of 14 to train at Hubbard Street." Much of that program grew out of the outreach work to the public schools that Hubbard Street had built to introduce dance to young people. "When we would approach it with young people, we would talk with them about what do your eyes see and what does your mind see?" Brogdon explains the approach to discussing what can be, to many people, a particularly intimidating art form. For adults she notes that there tends to be a desire for a narrative or "to get" the message of the choreographer. "I bring a lot of people to dance that have never seen it before. If I can say, 'There is nothing to get' before the performance, I have a totally different conversation afterward."

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK STEELMAN

Instead, she tries to talk with people about the elements of what they see and how they interact: The BEST acronym sums it up well: Body, Energy, Space, Time.

Looking ahead to the UNCW Presents season: A performance by Savion Glover, a man who is a phenomenal example of BEST. "I first saw him when I was at Duke," Brogdon notes. "He did a concert and he did a little lec-dem. Whenever he was trying to explain something and he ran out of words, he would just start tapping. And it was amazing how articulate he could be with his feet!"

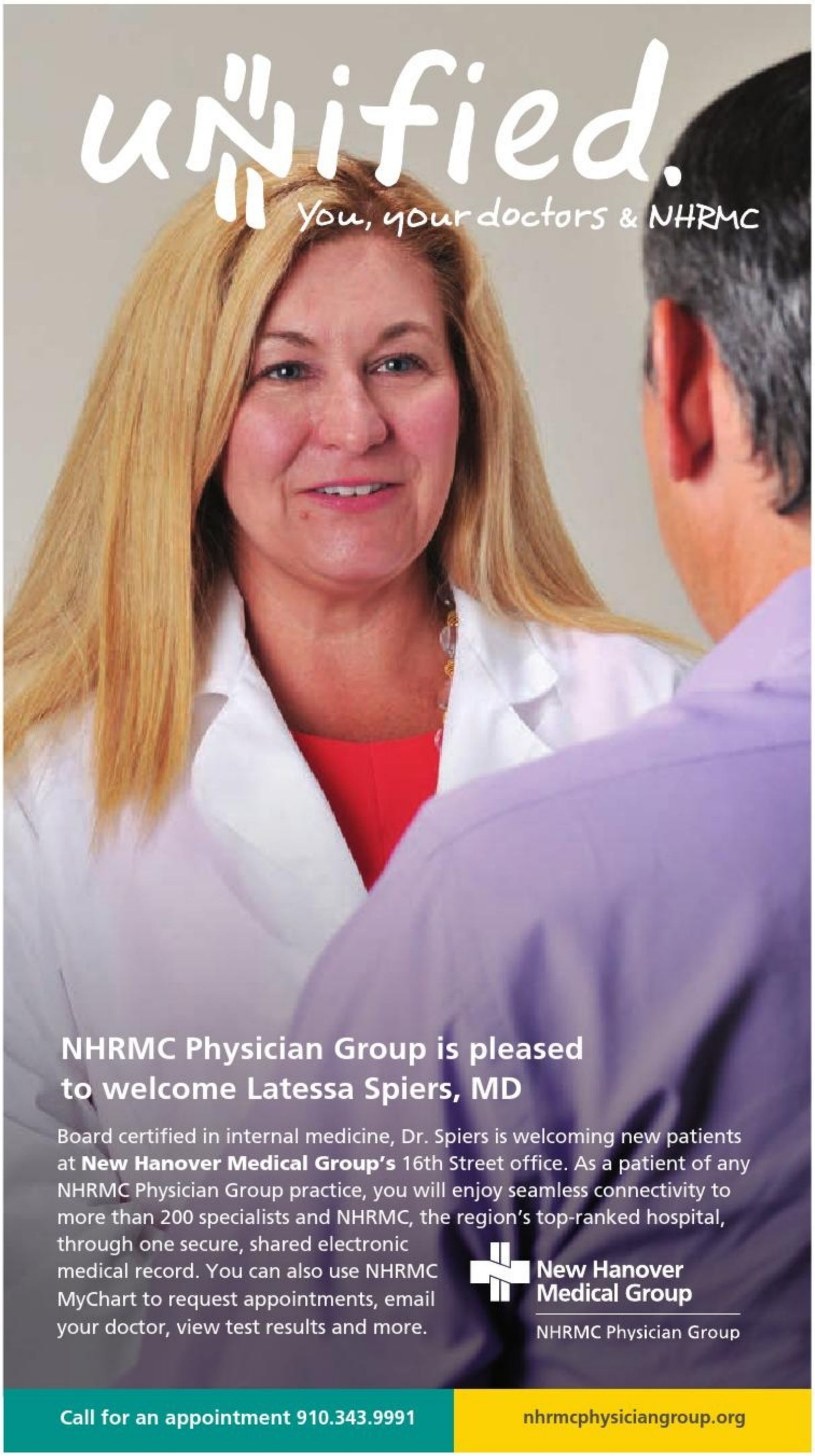
Brogdon inherited this season of performances at UNCW from Shane Fernando,

"I was at the Kennedy Center for nine years, and that is a great place to start your career,"

who left to open the new Cape Fear Stage at Cape Fear Community College. It is no secret that UNCW and the world of the arts on campus have been much embattled in the last few years. Longtime director of cultural arts Norman Bemelmans resigned last year in protest of changes and decisions that he felt ignored and slighted the arts employees. Much has changed, besides the staff, at UNCW. The Masters Series, part of the touring companies of performing arts that came to Kenan Auditorium, has been absorbed under the umbrella of UNCW Presents. "Next year will be the twenty-fifth anniversary season of UNCW Presents – everybody likes a party, right?" says Brogdon with a grin.

The 2016–2017 season will also be the first that she really gets to curate here. She promises a greater emphasis on international programming and artist residencies. "I have a lot of colleagues I can call on to collaborate with here. There are a lot of really smart people here." She flashes another mischievous smile, then adds, "Yes, and . . . ?"

Gwenyfar Rohler spends her days managing her family's bookstore on Front Street.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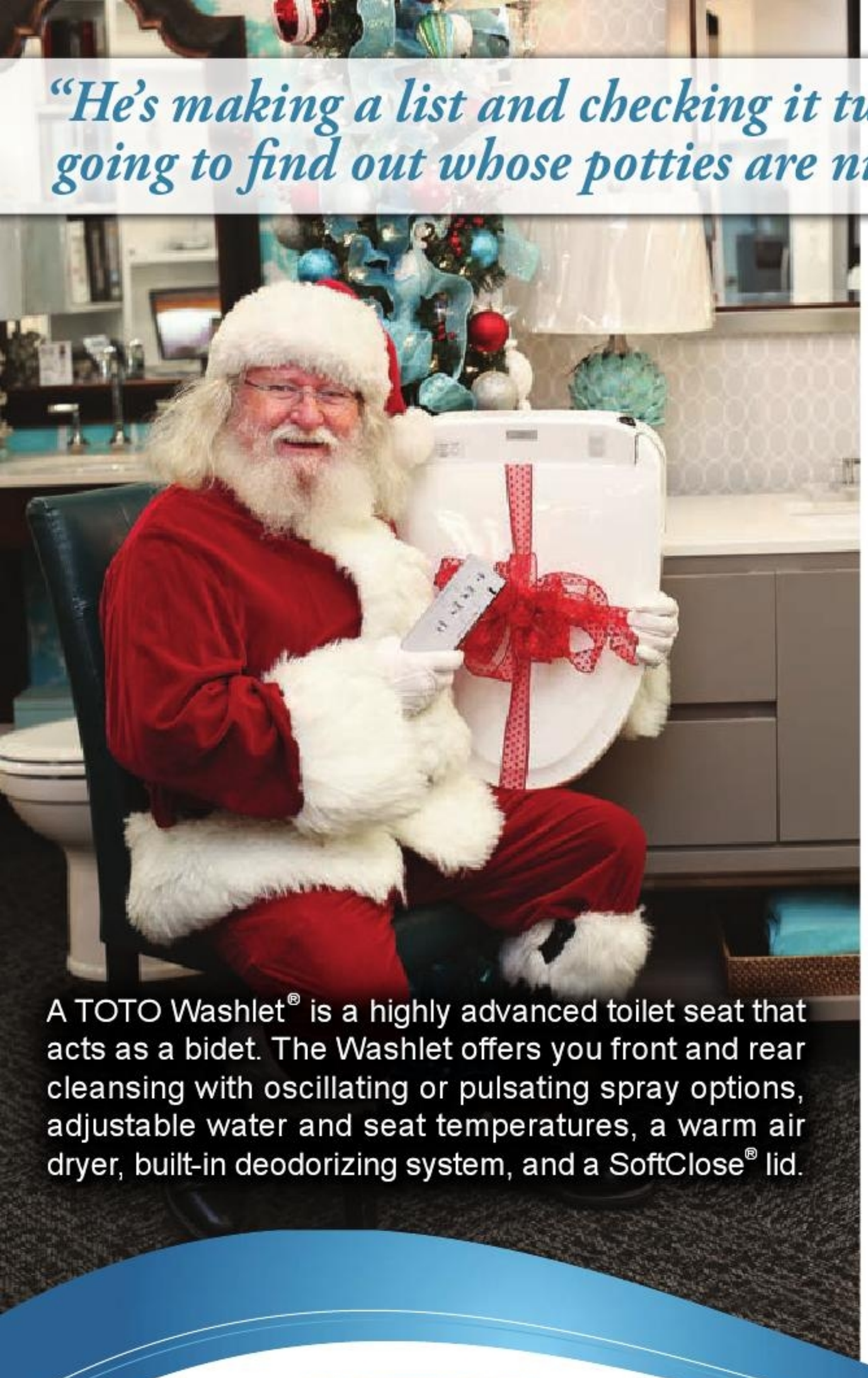

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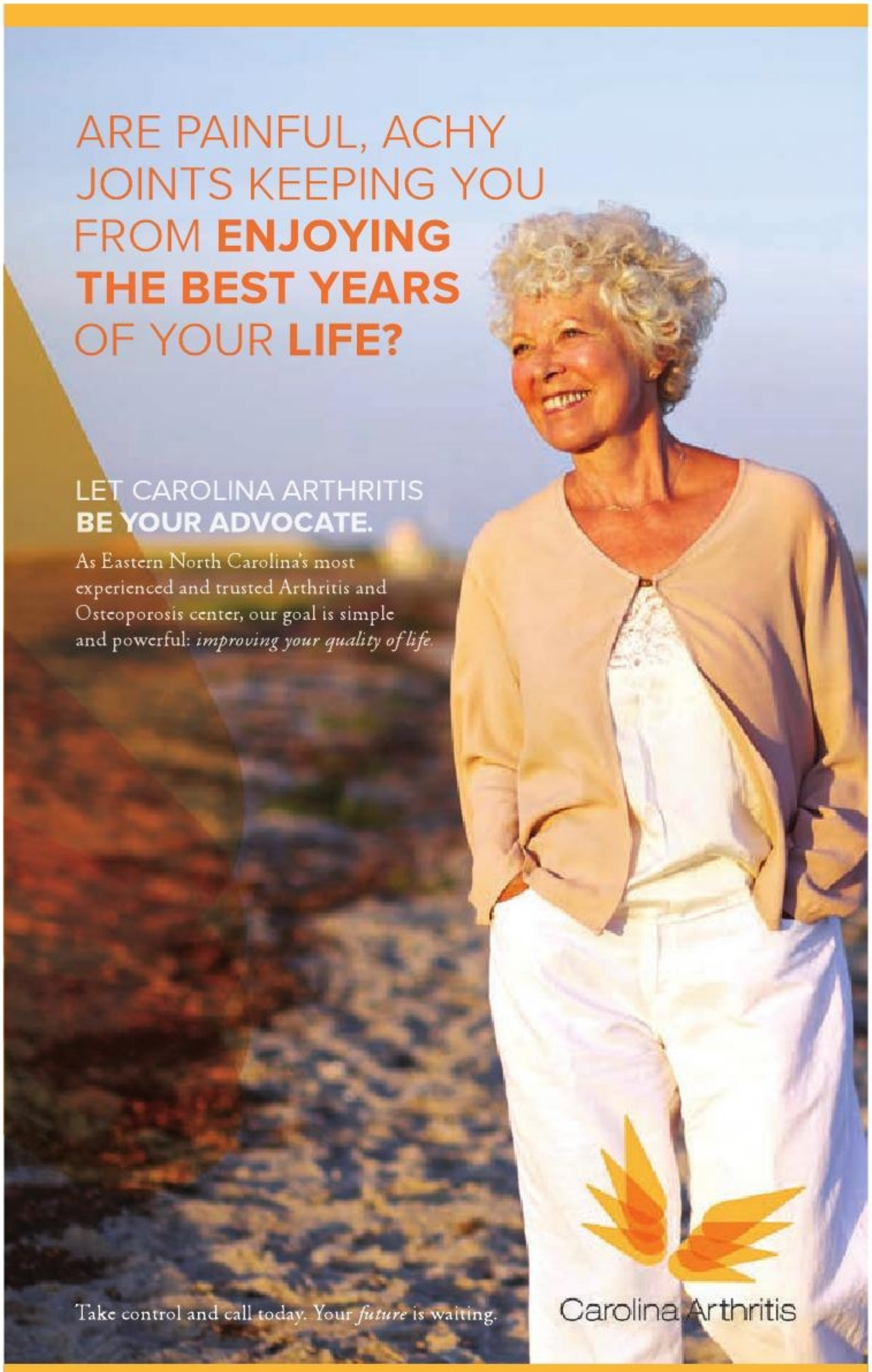
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The Winter Issue 2016

Next month, look for our new Winter Issue that combines January and February into a single jam-packed special issue that celebrates the best of winter in Wilmington and the Cape Fear.

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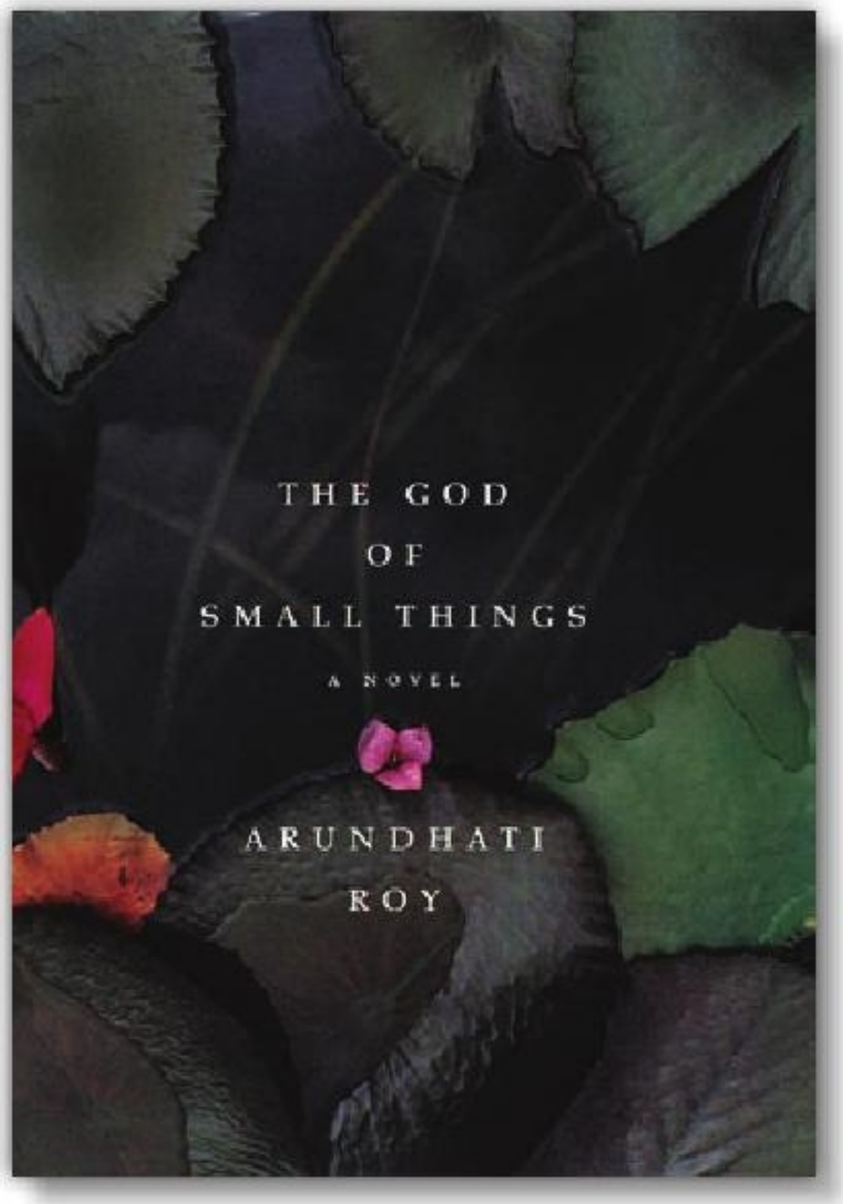
Salt MAGAZINE

Small Lives Matter

Revisiting The God of Small Things



By Brian Lampkin

Here at the Omnivorous Reader, I typically review newly published books, or perhaps newly reissued books like the tenth-anniversary edition of John Green's *Looking for Alaska* (*O.Henry*, May 2015). A responsibility of the book review section in any publication is to expose readers to new writers or at least new books by old writers.

So forgive me if once a year I reach back into the past to highlight a forgotten gem, a neglected masterpiece, or, more likely, a book I love out of all proportion to its fame. Occasionally a book will fade from the public consciousness even if it was once a highly regarded bestseller. Such is the case of Arundhati Roy's 1997 novel *The God of Small Things* (Random House, $16).

The God of Small Things is the only novel Arundhati Roy has ever published, but what a splash it made. It won the Booker Prize in 1997 and was on many lists of the year's best novels. But without a follow-up novel, Roy's fiction has faded from view, partially because it has been supplanted by the extraordinary political work she has done over the last twenty years. There's something in the American mind that neatly separates political writers from literary writers, as if the two could not coexist in the same person. More insidious is the insistence that "literature" should not be tainted by politics and that a work is necessarily weakened by a strong political structure.

There are novels that are clearly consumed by the author's adamant stance. But for every novel masticated by an Ayn Rand diatribe or gnawed to tears by the overly simple moralizing of John Grisham, there are hundreds of books that matter *because* they have made an effective and convincing political response to the horrors of the world: *1984*, *Native Son*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, etc., etc. etc. One of the things I most love about *The God of Small Things* is the way Roy weaves world-changing events into the very small lives of the 7-year-old twins Estha and Rahel who live in the small Indian town of Ayemenem. The manipulations of the powerful have disastrous effects on those trying to simply survive as best they can in a country seemingly determined to destroy their lives.

The overarching systems that control behavior and economic possibility in India reach into the rural towns and humble homes of the characters in *Small Things*. Roy's skill in revealing the role of the caste system — and the role of all the other smaller gradations of class and gender control — in the disturbing events that lead to Estha's lifetime of silence and Rahel's irrepressible sadness is remarkable. The novel is semi-autobiographical and it's easy to imagine where Roy gathers her fuel to wage her righteous fight for India's environment, the independence of Kashmir and the women's movement.

But it is the gross economic inequality that Roy witnesses that most drives her anger. In an article she wrote for *The Guardian* during the height of the Occupy movement in 2011, Roy makes clear the connection between American and Indian economic disparity:

"The Indian government worships U.S. economic policy. As a result of twenty years of the free market economy, today, one hundred of India's richest people own assets worth one-fourth of the country's GDP while more than 80 percent of the people live on less than 50 cents a day; 250,000 farmers, driven into a spiral of death, have committed suicide. We call this progress, and now think of ourselves as a superpower. Like you, we are well-qualified: We have nuclear bombs and obscene inequality."

But I think there might be another reason I'm focusing so much on Roy's critique of the larger impinging social forces that give so much power to her novel. I first read *The God of Small Things* nearly twenty years ago, and in my memory it remains one of the great books of my young adulthood. My recent rereading of the novel found me less moved, less emotionally

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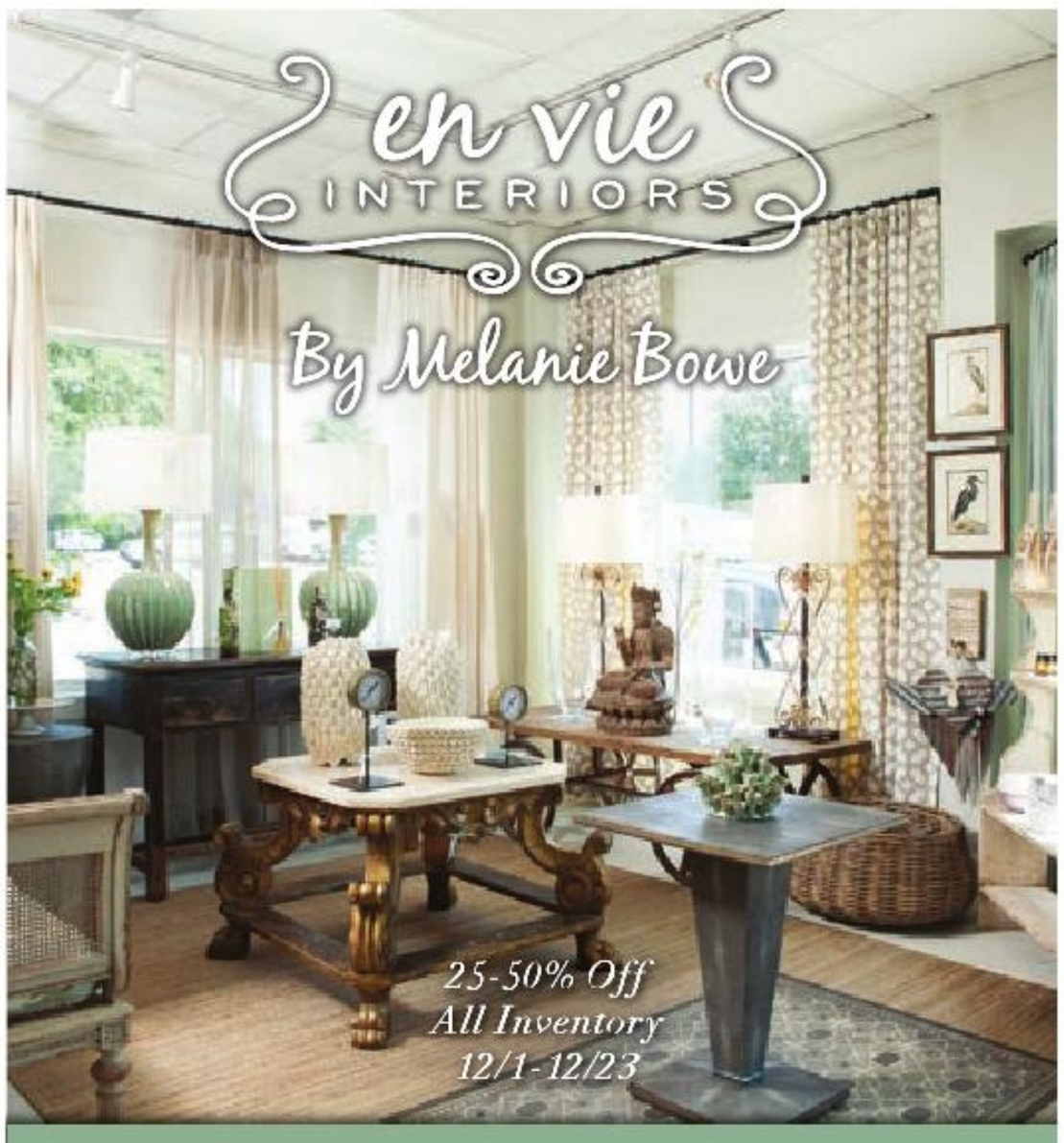

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engaged, less thrilled. You can't always read the same novel twice. Twenty years ago I was still actively involved in the lives of two young boys from Fiji — one of them named Esa and the other Yahya (who had a stubborn insistence on silence as well) — whose difficult lives were made more difficult by social forces and mental illness. I know that I identified with the book for very personal reasons, and the suffering of the twins Estha and Rahel was visceral. Today, I'm not nearly so emotionally raw about Esa and Yahya's lives and apparently by extension, not so moved by Estha and Rahel's fictional lives.

I am not the same reader I was twenty years ago, for better or worse. It would be a sad state of affairs if every book's value were dependent upon the novel's connection to personal events in a reader's life. Surely we can read Anthony Doerr's *All the Light We Cannot See* meaningfully without having lived through the Holocaust.

I can think of no other book that so effectively brings actual scents to life. I can smell the mangoes and pickles, and feel the humid heat of the subtropics. . .

But sometimes novels reach into our personal lives and resonate deeply with experiences we share with the various characters we encounter. *The God of Small Things* caught me at just the right time, and I'll always have that initial reading experience, which is not diminished by my latest experience with reading the novel.

Don't get me wrong: It's still an amazing book. I can think of no other book that so effectively brings actual scents to life. I can smell the mangoes and pickles, and feel the humid heat of the subtropics described on the pages. And the helplessness the reader feels in the face of stupid, brutal authority enacted upon children and lower caste individuals can be overwhelming. The twins' aunt, Baby Kochamma, is as complicated and compelling a villain as you're likely to encounter. By all means read *The God of Small Things*. It may very well be the book you need right now in your life. Or it might be the book you needed twenty years ago.

Brian Lampkin is one of the owners of Scuppernong Books in Greensboro.

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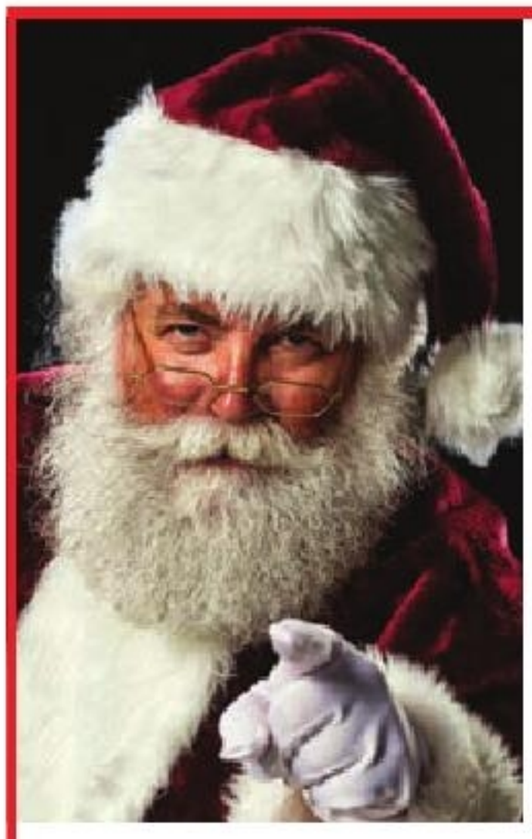

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Little Slice of Heaven

For Sister Mary Isaac Koenig of the Tileston Outreach Ministry, the sauce – and service to others – is everything

By Dana Sachs

"Today I had a touching experience," said Sister Mary Isaac Koenig, seated across from me at Pizzetta's Pizzeria. Sister Isaac runs the Tileston Outreach Ministry at the Basilica of St. Mary's. From 8:30 to 11:30 most mornings, she helps the poor.

That day, a homeless man had come in. "His blessing," she said, "is that he has a car," but he didn't have money for gas. Sister Isaac's organization is one of the few charities in Wilmington that provides funds, so she gave him some.

The man started to cry. "Can I have a hug?" he asked.

Sister Isaac sees people in desperate need every day, and she usually keeps these interactions professional. Something about this man touched her, though. "For one-and-a-half minutes, he sobbed in my arms. He just needed a friend."

Sister Isaac is a member of the Sisters of St. Ursula, an order founded in France in 1606. Previously, nuns had remained cloistered in convents, but the new order ventured into the community to teach women and aid the poor. Back then, the idea of educating women was "absolutely revolutionary," Sister Isaac told me, while aiding the poor can still seem revolutionary today. "I spend my life trying to bring down the stereotype that the poor are lazy," she said. "They're not lazy. It's not that they don't know how to manage money. They don't have any money to manage."

When nuns take orders, they make three vows: celibacy, obedience and poverty. The vow of celibacy provides them with the "freedom to help others," Sister Isaac explained. The vow of obedience means that "together with our religious superiors, we try to listen to what God tells us to do."

Don't assume that the vow of obedience makes Sister Isaac meek. She's the driving force behind a charity that provides $190,000 worth of funds, goods and services every year. She speaks her mind, too. On the controversial topic of the ordination of women, for example, she said, "I don't think there is a theological reason why women shouldn't be ordained." A moment later, laughing, she added, "Some of my fellow Catholics might say, 'Oh my God, there she goes,' but I'm free to have my opinion."

At 79 (two months older than Pope Francis), Sister Isaac remains vivacious, with an energy that you'd expect from a much younger person. As a nun, her forthrightness might surprise some, but she pointed out that "when you become a sister, you don't give up your thoughts and intelligence. You read and use your mind." In fact, the Sisters of St. Ursula tend to be highly educated. Sister Isaac has a BA in history and Latin, an MA in modern European history, an MA in earth literacy, and a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study in educational administration, all of which gave her the tools she needed to run schools for twenty-five years before moving to Wilmington in the 1980s.

In addition to talking about Sister Isaac's work, this column has a secondary purpose: We're also food critics. Would her third vow, of poverty, make it hard for her to assess the Meat Lover's Pizza?

Happily, no. Everybody's got to eat, and Sister Isaac, the cook for her convent, turned out to be a culinary expert. "I'm a good cook and a wonderful baker," she told me, "so I do know about food."

That knowledge came in handy at Pizzetta's, which offers a wide array of Italian specialties. We started with the grilled veggie salad, a bright

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arrangement of lightly charred eggplant, zucchini and red peppers, raw mushrooms and artichoke hearts served over mixed greens, topped with Parmigiano-Reggiano, and tossed in a Chianti vinaigrette. Sister Isaac's evaluation was precise: "Very delicious. Wonderful assortment. Sauce is yummy. Nicely flavored."

As a baker, she was particularly impressed by the restaurant's warm and aromatic garlic knots. "It's knotted but it's not too heavy," she said, examining a roll. "You can sort of pull it apart." When we dug into that Meat Lover's Pizza — a hearty but not ridiculous composition of pepperoni, sausage and meatballs over mozzarella — she noted the tasty seasoning of the sausage, then added, "I don't know too many people who don't like pepperoni." One of the nice things about Pizzetta's lasagna, she later noted, "is that they didn't skimp on the sauce."

Food is one of the pleasures of life, and Sister Isaac wants everyone to have the chance to enjoy it. Over lunch, she described the lunches that Tileston Outreach gives out regularly and the "breakfast bag" that they had handed out that morning to people who might not otherwise have anything to eat: "sweet bun, apple, apple juice and a napkin. Wouldn't you like that?"

The breakfast bag is, of course, about more than breakfast; she's recognizing the dignity in every human being. Tileston spends a thousand dollars a month on hygiene products so that people can brush their teeth and wash their hair, so that women can attend to their menstrual needs, so that babies have diapers. Sister Isaac hands out toilet paper, one roll at a time. She hands out funds so families won't lose their homes if they fall behind

on rent. With a regular team of 180 volunteers — Catholics and Baptists, Buddhists and atheists, anyone who wants to help — she provides for basic needs, no questions asked.

The Outreach relies on donations of money, household goods, clothing and food, and accepts all kinds of used items, but not junk. Looking for a guideline? "If you wouldn't give it to your sister," she said, "don't give it to me."

In a sense, Sister Isaac is not just providing for basic needs, but also giving people respect by acknowledging the complexity of their lives. "Are people going to judge the mom who comes in in January and can't pay her light bill because she got something nice for her child for Christmas?" she asked. "Am I going to give her a sermon? She doesn't need that."

Sister Isaac takes inspiration, in part, from Pope Francis. "It's what the Holy Father said," she explained. "It's not a number. We're putting a face on poverty." Looking across her desk toward her "guests" every morning, she can't erase the pain of the world. But with each roll of toilet paper, each hug, each sweet bun in a paper bag, she can lessen it, making hard lives a little easier.

Pizzetta's Pizza is at 4107 Oleander Drive and can be reached at (910) 799-4300. For more information about the Tileston Outreach Ministry, call (910) 762-5491, ext. 135, or visit www.thestmaryparish.org.

Dana Sachs' latest novel, The Secret of the Nightingale Palace, *is available at bookstores throughout Wilmington.*

When the Smoke Gets in your Eyes

Matthew Register of Southern Smoke BBQ

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES STEFIUK

By Jason Frye

The lawn didn't look like the sort of place where you'd eat a heaping plate of barbecue. It was elegant. Long trestle tables of oiled chestnut slabs stretched from one end to the other, places set with white chairs and teal napkins and silverware tied with a piece of jute; mason jars — some filled with pickles, others with wildflowers — punctuated the tabletop. Above, bare bulbs were strung through, in and around live oak branches. The grass was that perfect jewel green of spring.

On the air, the perfume of smoke and the caramel of cooked pig.

We were in Garland, an hour north and west of Wilmington, for a sit-down dinner at Southern Smoke BBQ. Part of their South Supper Series, this was barbecue elevated, elegant, egalitarian even. This town of six — maybe seven— hundred residents is home to a Brooks Brothers factory and, though unknown to me, that's been its claim to fame for decades. Matthew Register and Southern Smoke BBQ are changing that, putting Garland on the map and bringing barbecue lovers from near and far here to eat on Thursdays and Fridays, for lunch only, for the quartet of South Supper Series events every year.

"When I open the doors, I open them to a line," Register says, slightly sheepishly. "It's amazing; no feeling like it, to open the doors and have people standing there, waiting, ready to eat barbecue."

What brings them is his barbecue, and as anyone who's spent any time in North Carolina knows, barbecue can be a touchy subject.

"Oh, it's polarizing. Barbecue is absolutely one of the most polarizing

subjects you can bring up in North Carolina. Everybody has an uncle or a friend who cooks 'cue. In Eastern North Carolina it's personal to us. Every family reunion, every homecoming at church, every time we celebrate, someone cooks up a pig," he says.

Register takes a very traditional approach to barbecue, elaborating that it tastes of three elements: wood, pork and sauce. Now, within those three flavor elements is a complex world. The oak can deliver a different flavor depending on how thick the bark is or what part of the tree the wood is from. How much mast did the pig eat, and what kind of hog is it? And sauce, well, sauce can be as divisive a subject as barbecue itself, but let's just say it can deliver anything from a vinegary wallop to a honeyed sweetness, but the best accents the meat and wood and allows the other flavors to take center stage.

"Eastern North Carolina, Western, Lexington, whole hog, shoulders, ribs, whatever you cook, if it's good, it's good. When it's cooked properly and seasoned well, good barbecue shows," Register says.

To some, that's blasphemy, but to Register and his legion of loyal diners, it's Gospel. Do you need a witness? Head out to Garland at 10:30 a.m. any Thursday or Friday and you'll find the line forming. Arrive at 11 and it's a dozen deep. Arrive at 12:30 and they're out of ribs.

"I just try to cook in a way that honors the old guys, the ones who paved the way for barbecue cooks like me," he says. "Mr. Wilbur, Sam [from Skylight Inn], the guys from Allen and Son [Bar-B-Q] and Lexington [Barbecue No. 1], when these old-school barbecue guys say, 'I haven't tasted 'cue like that for thirty years,' man, that's something."

Tradition. The wood, pork and sauce do the talking. But the sides, well, what's a barbecue place without good sides?

When he opened Southern Smoke, Register admits his sides weren't what he'd have liked them to be.

"It was expected, totally expected. My barbecue — sandwiches and ribs — were solid, but the sides, I had to do the can of green beans and the standard potato salad because that's what people expected. That expected menu builds trust, and once I had their trust, I could start to introduce the sides I wanted to eat."

Those sides include mac and cheese, a barbecue staple many say is easy to make, and it is, until you introduce French techniques and that béchamel base. The same can be said for his take on green beans, collards, the soups and stews he serves in cooler weather.

"I have to stay creative. I have to stretch and push. Folks in other jobs, they don't get it. A banker doesn't know this. I mean, I'm up at 2 a.m. thinking, worrying, asking myself, 'How do I make okra better?'"

This culinary exploration and restlessness is part of a chef's life.

"I'm still uncomfortable with the title 'chef.' What's it mean to be a chef? Keith [Rhodes], Vivian [Howard], Scott [Crawford], they're chefs. Me, I'm not even the best cook in my house," he says. "I'm still learning who I am. I push because I don't want to lose that creative edge."

Far from losing that edge, he's still honing the knife. In early 2016, Southern Smoke looks to open a food truck, something he says was inspired in part by Keith Rhodes, a chef who's been a champion, cheerleader and occasional sandwich maker for Register (it's the stuff of legend, but Rhodes stopped by, saw Register was in the weeds, so he donned some gloves, jumped behind the line and began making and serving barbecue sandwiches). The truck will be used as part of Register's catering business, but it'll also be a fixture at the farmers market in Clinton; he even hints at appearances in Wilmington.

All of it comes back to the barbecue, though. Simple, three ingredients to make a meal that calls diners to those tables under the trees, willing to drive an hour or more for a taste of Southern Smoke.

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Gumbo for a Crowd:

Chicken and Stock

6 chicken quarters
1 1/2 cups dry white wine
10 cups water
5 whole garlic cloves
1 tbs. whole black peppercorns

Season chicken with salt and pepper. Grill or bake until finished, then remove meat from bone and refrigerate until ready to use. Place scraps and bones into a large stock pot, then add dry white wine, water, garlic and peppercorns. Heat on the stove on high for 30 minutes. Let cool. Strain the broth mixture, saving only the liquid. Stock can be refrigerated for a few days.

Roux

1/2 lb. thick cut bacon
1 lb. Andouille sausage
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1 large white onion, chopped
1 large green bell pepper, chopped
3 celery stalks, chopped
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
5 tbs. butter
1/2 cup Worcestershire sauce
Handful parsley
4 cups hot water
28 oz. canned tomatoes
3 pounds okra, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
8 garlic cloves (minced)
Green onions for garnish

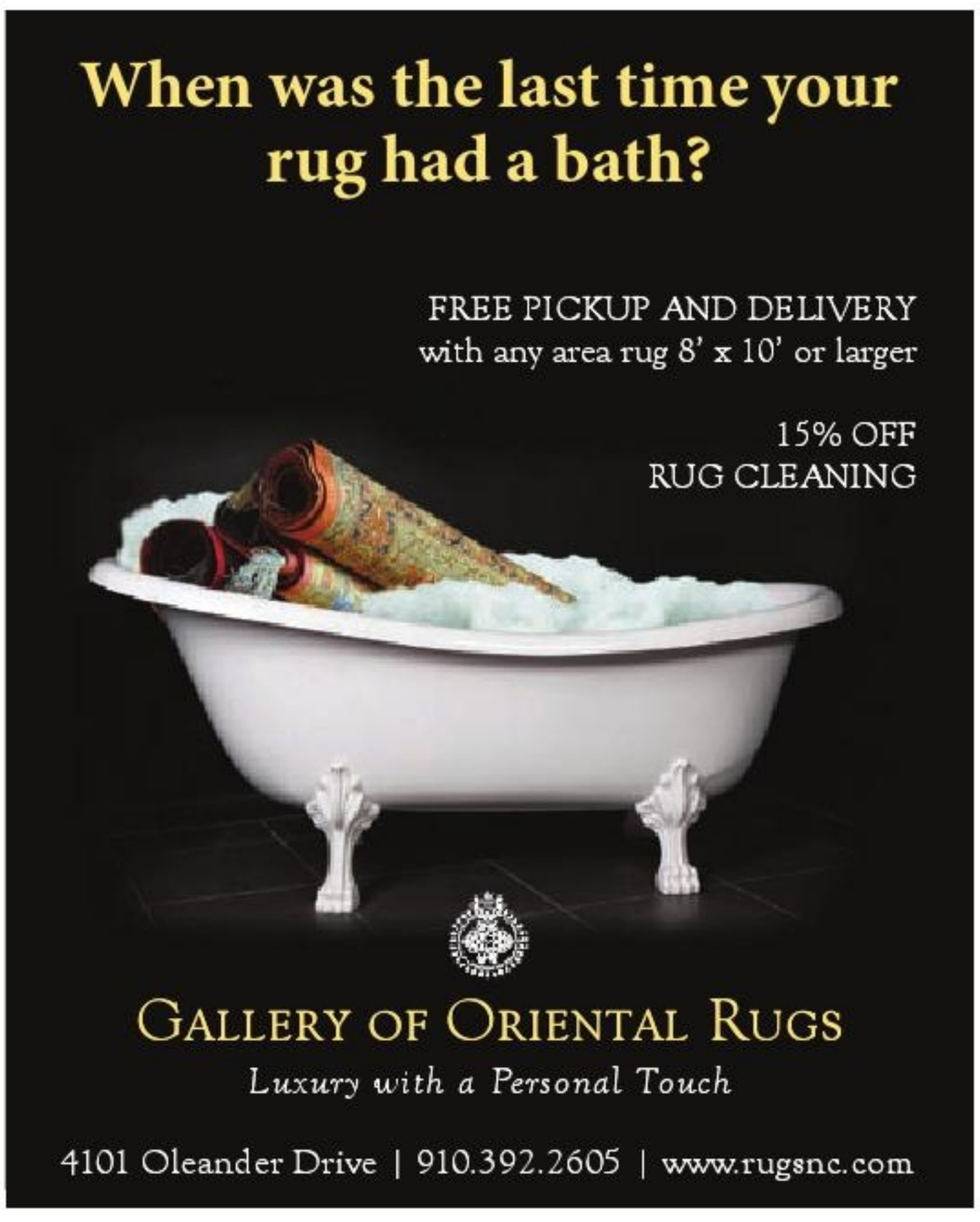
This is the trickiest part of gumbo, but with a little patience and attention it will become easy.

In a large Dutch oven, fry bacon on medium heat. When finished, remove bacon and set aside. Cook sausage in the same pot until finished, then remove and set aside. Turn heat to low and add 1/4 cup of vegetable oil.

Add 1/2 cup of flour and 2 tbs. of butter to Dutch oven and whisk mixture constantly for 10 minutes. Roux should have a paste consistency; if it doesn't, add more butter. If it appears to have too much liquid, add one tbs. of flour. The roux will go from a khaki color to a dark khaki; when it starts to look brick-red it is finished. Set aside and let cool.

Return your roux to medium heat and add your "Holy Trinity" (onions, celery and bell pepper). Add remaining butter and garlic and cook until onions are translucent. Add Worcestershire sauce, chicken stock and water. Add reserved chicken, sausage and chopped-up bacon. Stir. Bring to a simmer and add tomatoes. Cook 30 minutes, then add okra and cook for an additional 20 minutes. Serve over white rice with green onions as garnish.

Jason Frye is a travel writer and author of Moon North Carolina *and* Moon NC Coast. *He's a barbecue judge, he rarely naps, and he's always on the road. Keep up with his travels at tarheeltourist.com.*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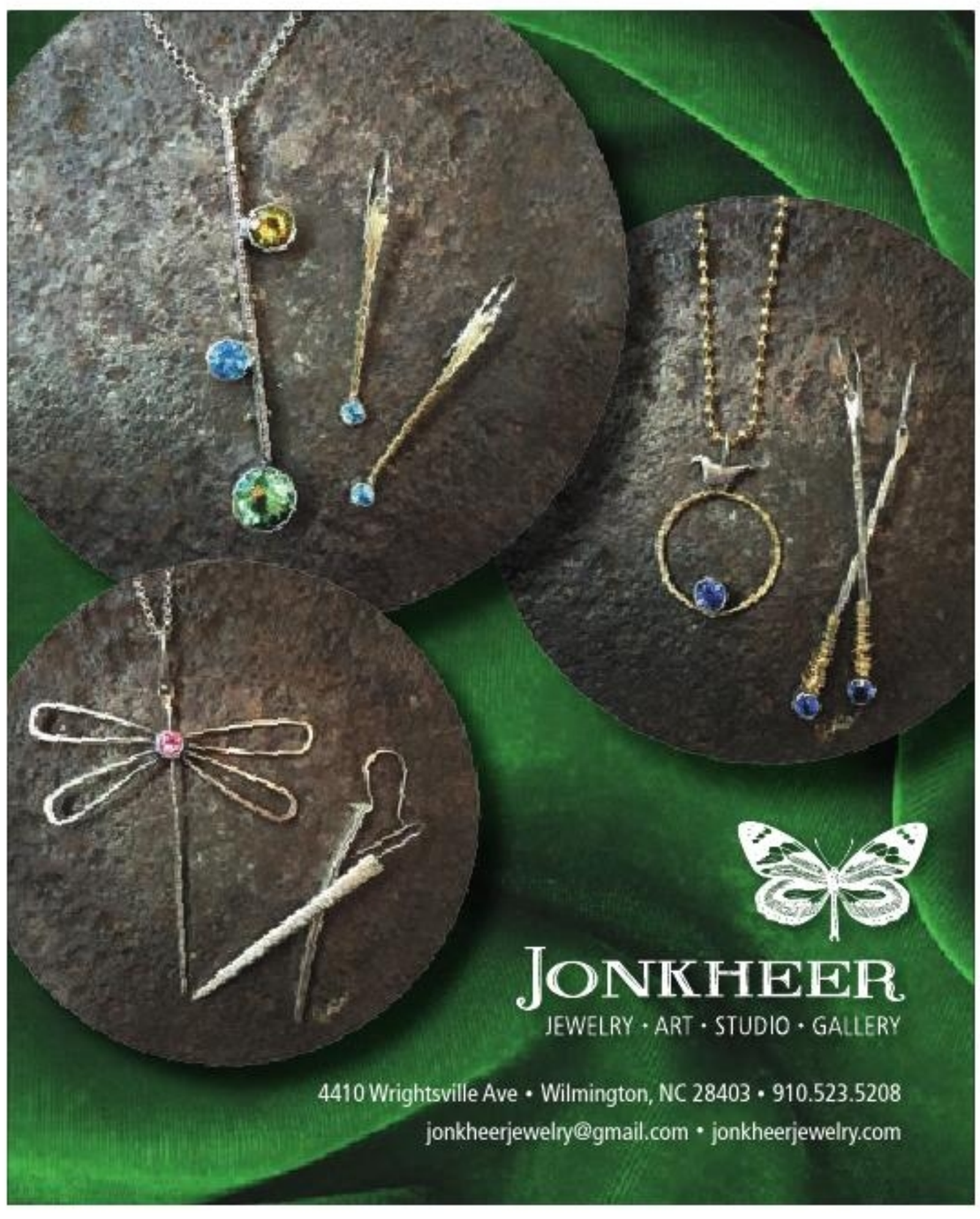
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All Gingered Up

An ancient family recipe yields one fine and potent ginger beer

By Jason Frye

First things first: Islander ain't the ginger beer you think you know.

The ginger beer you know — Gosling's, Reed's, maybe even Barritt's — is little more than glorified ginger ale, lacking in the powerful, fruity, spicy punch you find in more authentic brews. You have to reach for a Crabbie's to get a proper beer, but even then the flavor is off, not absent, but not fully present. In a day when the idea of authenticity rings through every ingredient, recipe and menu item, how is this the case, especially when we're talking about a drink that was born in the Colonial Caribbean and spread throughout the American colonies and Great Britain, becoming what Georgia Dunn calls the beer of our Founding Fathers?

Islander Ginger Beer is changing that.

Where Crabbie's has been around since 1801, Islander Ginger Beer's recipe predates that by centuries.

"If you look back fourteen generations, you'll find my ancestor, Thomas Harriott, at the start of it all," Dunn says. She should know. Her deep research into the family's history in the Salt Keys of the Turks and Caicos, Bermuda and England revealed much, including family recipes like the one that inspired Islander Ginger Beer.

"In my research, I found that the Harriotts were a family of entrepreneurs." A fact that's true today, as Dunn is the creator of Islander Ginger Beer and CEO of the brew's parent, the British West Indies Trading Company.

Her grandfather some generations removed, Thomas Harriott, was a consort to Queen Elizabeth I, the Virgin Queen; Sir Walter Raleigh; even Shakespeare. Harriott and a few other intrepid colonists, including his son born on the wrong side of the sheets, Thomas Harriott the Younger, moved to Bermuda to farm tobacco. As it turns out, tobacco didn't work so well, but the Harriott family owned something even more valuable: salt. In fact, they owned around 80 percent of the salt available in the Caribbean, a most lucrative commodity in a time when salt was the primary preservative.

"Thomas Harriott the Younger and several other Bermudians also worked to develop the structure for future colonies, going in to select sites and set up what infrastructure they could," Dunn says. "All this time — from the sixteenth century on — the Harriotts were brewing ginger beer."

The original brew wasn't like what most ginger beers are today. Those non-alcoholic ginger beers are soda with ginger flavoring, ginger ale on steroids; even Crabbie's deviates from the roots of the drink. See, Crabbie's is beer, plain old malt-based beer, but with ginger thrown in at the end.

Islander, well, Islander's different.

"It's a four-week process to brew [Islander]. I touch every spice, every piece of ginger, every ingredient that goes in because we're using a recipe that's old, that's tied to the roots of the beverage and the roots of this country. I want to make sure everything's fresh, flavorful and perfect for each batch," she says.

This fastidious control over the recipe, ingredients and brewing process is how Dunn ensured that Islander Ginger Beer is free from preservatives and is rich in flavors and colors delivered by fresh ingredients.

But why ginger beer? Her family's history as tied to the brew is one reason — after all, "Harriott [the Elder], a plant collector, introduced ginger

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to the Caribbean from Asia via Spanish traders," she says — the other is the historical importance of the beverage.

As Dunn explains, ginger beer was the dominant drink of the Caribbean, Great Britain and her American colonies for 300 years. It started as a way to purify water, taking advantage of the fermentation process (and a very low alcohol content) and ginger's natural antiseptic qualities to make water potable, and became a daily drink. Every family across the Caribbean had a recipe, some familial variation on the theme, but ginger beer all the same. Soon, sailors were using ginger beer to water down rum that came off the still just a little too hot (read: strong) to be palatable. ("Ginger beer was popular with pirates," Dunn jokes. "They get a little snort of rum and the ginger helps settle the stomach, so it was perfect for life aboard a boat.") From there it spread and its popularity grew over the course of a couple of centuries. Until that popularity grew just a little too much and as governments are want to do, the British saw fit to begin taxing all alcoholic beverages in the mid-1800s.

"[Taxation] caused brewers to change their recipes and methods and make ginger 'beer' without alcohol. They figured the taxes were high enough on the much stronger rum anyway, so pay the taxes once, add the ginger beer and make a drink they were all enjoying before the taxes, and not much has changed in the end."

Except that little change ended up being a big one, and with the recipes altered, ginger beer was forever changed; though we did gain a new drink, the Dark and Stormy, so all was not lost.

The story is the same in America. Dunn says that prior to the Revolution, our Founding Fathers did what other families did and brewed their own, and the drink remained popular in the nation's early years. "Up through the 1800s, there were 1,500 ginger beer breweries operating in the U.S.," she says. That lasted until 1876, when similar taxation caused a decline in the industry, then the early 20th century's Volstead Act and period of Prohibition killed it altogether.

Dunn says what she's trying to do is "put the beer back in this beverage" by returning to the family recipes for this centuries-old drink.

She's succeeding. Islander, clocking in at 5 percent alcohol by volume, is sold as a beer, not a soft drink, and sales are increasing almost exponentially. Wilmington served as Islander's U.S. test market and Dunn says the enthusiasm showed by distributor R.A. Jeffreys, chefs like Keith Rhodes, and bottle shops in the area has helped the ginger beer start off strong here in the States. Currently they're increasing production and looking at ways to widen distribution.

All this is just part of the story of Georgia Dunn and her family, a tale stretching back four-

teen generations; one she's recorded in a massive history and one she's happy to share with you over a ginger beer anytime you see her out and about.

Bourbon Ginger Fizz

Recipe by culinary expert Heidi Billotto

For a duo of drinks:

2 highball glasses with ice

2 shots of your favorite bourbon

1/4 cup honey simple syrup (made with equal parts local honey and water, boiled down till honey is totally dissolved, then cooled)

3–4 drops orange bitters

2 ripe and juicy slices of orange

1 bottle Islander Ginger Beer

Combine bourbon, honey simple syrup and orange bitters and shake or blend well. Pour equal amounts into each glass of ice. Top each glass with half a bottle of Islander Ginger Beer. Garnish with orange and enjoy!

Islander Ginger Beer Braised Pork Tenderloin with Figs

Recipe by culinary expert Heidi Billotto

3 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil

1 clove garlic, minced

2 Tbsp. minced fresh rosemary

2 Tbsp. minced fresh sage

2 pork tenderloins, cut into 1-inch-thick medallions

12–15 large dried figs

1 bottle Islander Ginger Beer

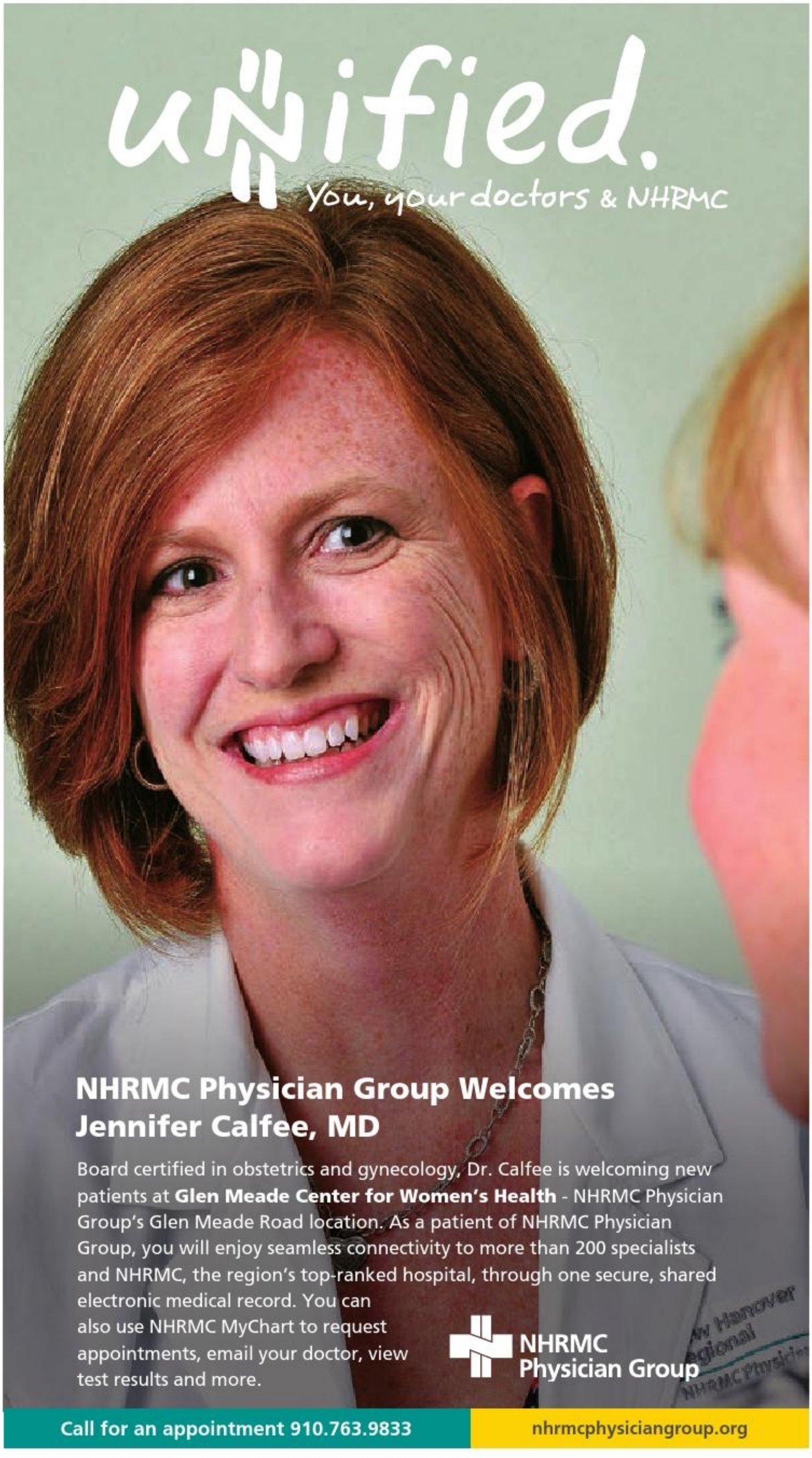
3 shallots, minced

1 1/2 cups beef stock, 1 1/2 cups chicken stock

Toss olive oil with minced garlic and minced herbs. Add pork and toss to coat. Allow to marinate for 30 minutes or so. Marinate the figs in a half bottle of Islander Ginger Beer.

Remove pork from the marinade and brown pieces side by side in a hot skillet about 4–6 minutes on each side. As you turn the tenderloins, add the shallots to the skillet. Add the figs and the Ginger Beer in which they have been soaking to the pan and cook until almost all of the liquid has evaporated. Add the stock and remaining Ginger Beer to the pan; bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low. Cook until the liquid has reduced by half and pork is tender. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve hot with pan juices over soft polenta, rice or mashed potatoes.

Jason Frye is a regular contributor to Salt. *Loves to eat and drink well. Just ask him.*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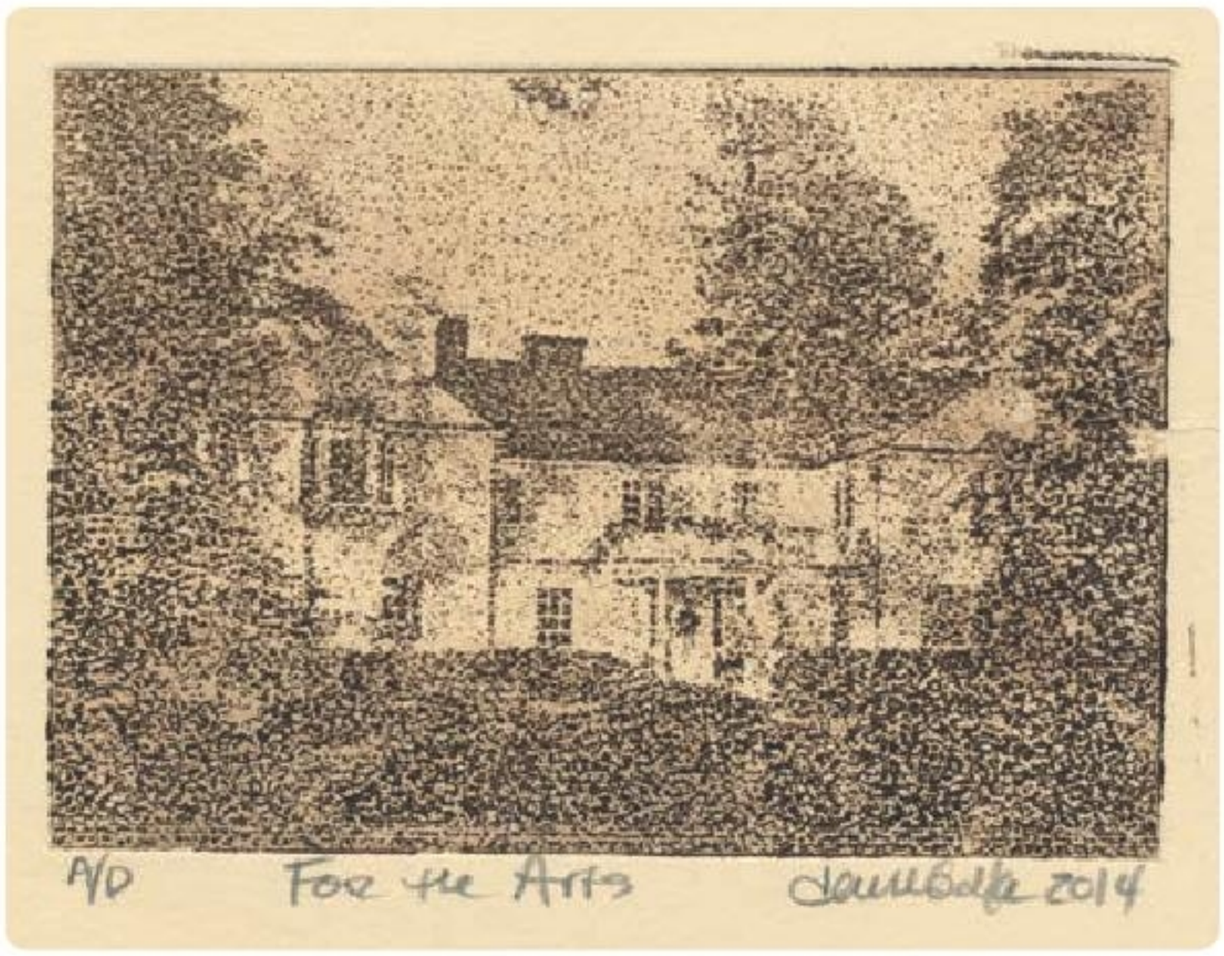
Alone With Giants

A productive week at the Weymouth Center for the Arts and Humanities was time well-spent



By Wiley Cash

I should've been writing, but instead I was staring at my iPhone, awaiting an incoming FaceTime call from my wife. While I waited, I flipped through Instagram, looking at pictures I'd already looked at dozens of times: our 1-year-old daughter, Early, eating breakfast; Early playing with toys; Early reading a book; Early and my wife, Mallory, at the playground. Across the room, North Carolina novelist Wilma Dykeman caught my eye; she watched me play with my phone. Her discerning gaze made me feel as if she were judging me for not writing. I moved to the sofa across from where I'd been sitting, but when I looked up I found that I was staring into Fred Chappell's eyes. The eyes of a man who's written dozens of books were not the eyes I wanted to be staring into while struggling to complete a first draft of a novel I'd already been working on for far too long. I moved again, and I was relieved to see Lee Smith's smiling face. Lee Smith has never made anyone feel uncomfortable. Thank you, Lee, for not judging me.

To be honest, I shouldn't have been sitting in the study, but the room that doubles as the North Carolina Literary Hall of Fame is the only place, in Southern Pines, on the second floor of the Weymouth Center for the Arts and Humanities, where writers-in-residence can pick up an Internet signal, which is a good thing when you spend most of your time in your room at your desk. The study is lined with portraits of famous North Carolina writers, and when you're not feeling guilty for not sitting at the desk in your room, it can be very inspirational to immerse yourself in North Carolina's immense contribution to American literature. Many of my favorite writers are honored there, including Elizabeth Spencer, Charles Chesnutt and Thomas Wolfe.

Thomas Wolfe had a huge effect on American literature. He also made quite an impression on James Boyd, an American novelist who moved to Southern Pines, North Carolina, in 1920 and built the mansion known as the Boyd House on the estate known as Weymouth. At Weymouth, the Boyd family entertained a steady stream of literati, Thomas Wolfe among them. Legend holds that one evening Wolfe arrived in Southern Pines on the late train, and after walking from the station to Weymouth and finding everyone asleep, he located an unlocked window and climbed inside. The next morning, Boyd's son discovered the giant form of Thomas Wolfe asleep on the floor of the living room in front of the great fireplace.

There are four bedrooms for writers-in-residence at Weymouth, two of which are related to Wolfe: the Thomas Wolfe room and the Maxwell E. Perkins room. Perkins, who also edited F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway, was Wolfe's editor at Scribner's. Perkins is best known as the man who helped Wolfe cut thousands upon thousands of words from the novel that would become *Look Homeward, Angel*. I stayed in the Perkins, room during my week at Weymouth, and I secretly hoped that a few of the thousands of words Max had cut from Tom's North Carolina novel would

ART PRINT BY DENISE BAKER

find their way into my own.

I'd attended other writing residencies before my week at Weymouth. In 2011, I spent a month at Yaddo in Saratoga Springs, New York, and later that summer I spent three weeks at the MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire. In the summer of 2014, I rented a cabin outside Asheboro and spent a week working on my third novel, the same novel I was now spending a week working on at Weymouth. Those earlier residencies had been immersive experiences. I woke up thinking about the novel I was writing; I went to sleep thinking about it as well. Things were different at Weymouth: I woke up thinking about Early, and I went to sleep thinking about her too.

This isn't to say that I didn't get a ton of work done during my week at Weymouth. I'm someone who harbors an incredible amount of guilt when I'm away from home, something my career often requires when I'm on a book tour, at a writing residency, or teaching a workshop at a university. My feeling is that when I'm away from home I have to make my absence positive instead of negative; therefore, I work. At Weymouth, I aimed for 2,000 good words a day. After a week, I went home with 15,000 new words added to my novel.

To be honest, I don't know how I got that much writing accomplished at Weymouth, especially because I spent so many hours in the study, staring at Instagram and FaceTiming with Mallory and Early. Each time I saw Early's face I made certain to check to see if anything had changed. Her eyes were still blue, her laugh familiar. She still threw scrambled eggs on the floor. Nothing, it seemed, had changed, but that didn't stop me from willing the days to move faster. I wanted the week to speed by, and each night I threatened to come home to Wilmington in the morning, but my wife, who wanted me to talk less about writing this novel and spend more time actually writing it, encouraged me to stay and take advantage of the time that Weymouth had so graciously given me.

I arrived home a week later to find Mallory and Early waiting for me on the front porch. When they saw me, Mallory stood and placed Early feet-first on the ground, then, holding both of Early's hands, the two walked toward me. This was new. This was something she hadn't been doing the week before. Time, it seemed, had moved quickly after all. And Early was moving quickly too. She reached up and took my hand, and holding Mallory's in the other she began walking back toward the front door, nearly pulling us along.

"Slow down, Early," said Mallory. "Slow down."

I was thinking the same thing. I still am.

Wiley Cash is a New York Times *best-selling author whose second novel,* This Dark Road to Mercy, *was released last year. He lives in Wilmington.*

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THE NUTCRACKER
BALLET FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES
DECEMBER 4 AT 4 PM & 7 PM
DECEMBER 5 AT 10 AM
Charles Dickens
A CHRISTMAS CAROL
Dec. 10-12, 17-19 & 21 at 7 pm
Dec. 12 & 19 at 2 pm
Dec. 13 & 20 at 3 pm
IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE
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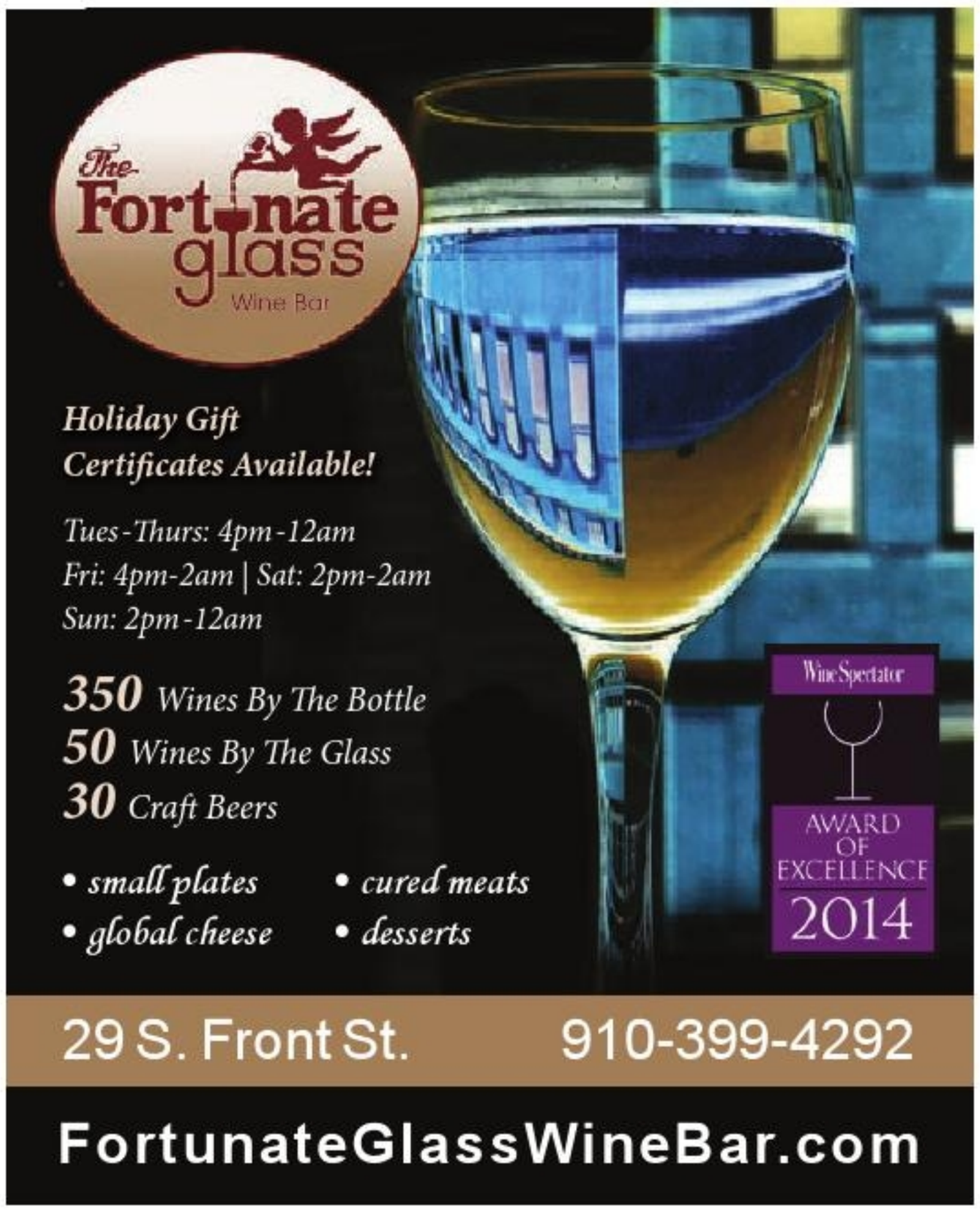

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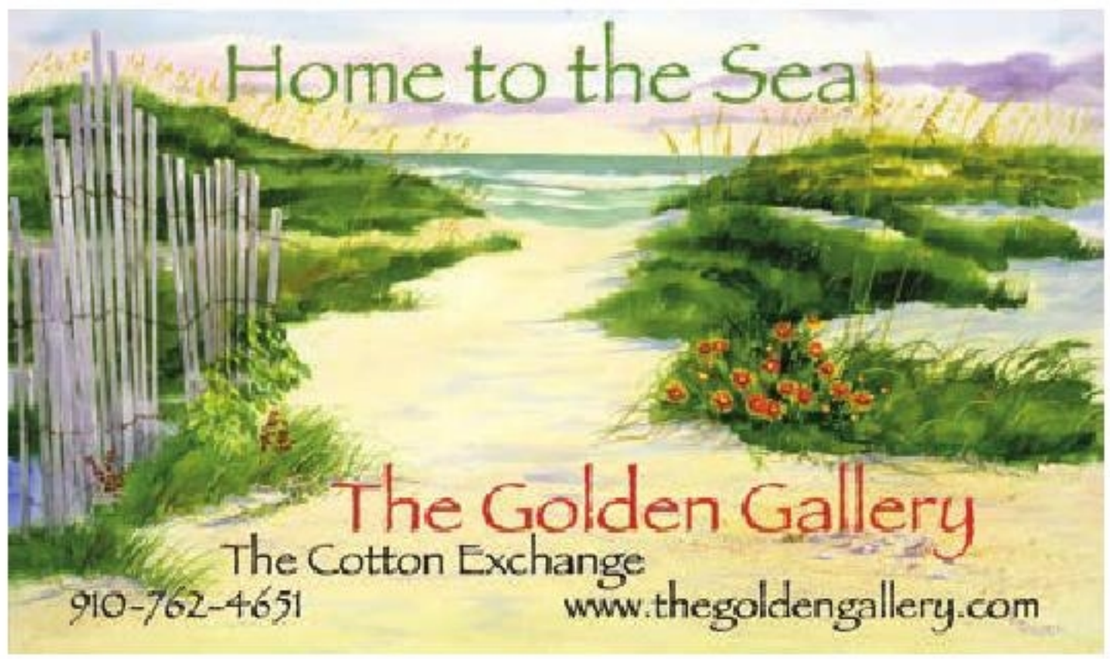

Red Bird

State bird of seven states, the Northern cardinal is a year-round gem

By Susan Campbell

Without a doubt, the most recognizable bird in the eastern United States is the Northern cardinal. Its brilliant color, wide distribution and affinity with bird feeders make it a much-loved addition to yards from Maine to Florida, across the lower Midwest and even into parts of Arizona and New Mexico. In fact, the cardinal is so popular that it is the state bird of seven states.

Northern cardinals are medium-size songbirds with distinctive red crests. They sing a loud *chorry, chorry, chorry* song and produce an exceptionally loud metallic *chip*. Mated pairs often duet in spring and summer. Males are bright red all over with a thick, orange-red bill and black mask. Females are brown with a reddish tinting to the wings and tail, and an orange bill. Young cardinals are even more nondescript: uniform gray-brown. They acquire their colorful adult plumage within a few months of fledging.

It is interesting to note that the actual shade of the male's red feathers is influenced by diet. Noticeably salmon-colored males can be found in the fall following the post-season full body molt. This occurs when the birds are feeding on items with lower levels of anthocyanins.

Here in North Carolina, the cardinal – or "red bird" as old-timers call it – can be found year-round throughout the state, in suburban areas as well as the thicker vegetation associated with forest edges. Given their strong bills, they can feed on a variety of foods. Cardinals not only forage for berries and seeds and caterpillars; they can also kill lizards and small snakes. Anyone who has ever handled a cardinal (as we bird banders do frequently) can attest to the effectiveness of their bills as weapons!

During breeding season, April through August, cardinals may produce as many as four sets of young. They typically lay four eggs per clutch in a nest usually located in thick shrubbery. Young cardinals, who are noisy and leave the nest before they are capable of sustained flight, are often the target of predators.

These handsome birds are most welcome in winter, when they can be lured to seed feeders. Their festive color is certainly a wonderful sight during the holidays. Northern Cardinals love black oil sunflower but are also attracted to safflower and millet. They may even hover to pick at suet during cold or wet weather. In my old yard, I used to feed a couple of pairs year-round. But with all of the native dogwood, winged sumac and chokeberry here on the farm, I hope to spot even more cardinals this season.

Susan would love to receive your wildlife sightings and photos. She can be contacted at or (910) 695-0651.

The Christmas Bird Count

Celebrating the season with the largest and oldest citizen-science project in the nation

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY VIRGINIA HOLMAN

A couple of years back I participated in my first Christmas Bird Count at Greenfield Lake. I'm more of a bird watcher than a hardcore birder — I have some identification skills, but I've never bothered to compile a life list. Fortunately, the Christmas Bird Count, which runs each year from December 14 through January 5, welcomes birders of all levels.

So what was my first count like? Cold. Quite cold. Our group began counting just after dawn in a brisk 28 degrees and finished in a comparatively balmy 42 degrees by late afternoon. Greenfield Lake is 4.5 miles around, so I was surprised that it took us almost nine hours to survey a relatively small area. We'd seen so many birds — ospreys, great egrets, waxwings, anhingas, pileated woodpeckers, golden-crowned kinglets — that the time had flown by, so to speak.

I learned several things on that excursion. First, it's rather shocking just how many birds congregate around Greenfield Lake in the winter. Second, joining a Christmas Bird Count group that focused on a single location rather than a more advanced trip that visited multiple sites was a stroke of good luck for this relative newbie birder. The birding around the lake was intense, and the census takers needed to stay focused on the task at hand; the fact that we weren't rushing from site to site meant that folks could occasionally chat a bit and cheerfully answer a question or two.

Even so, it was clear that the goal wasn't to educate novice birders such as myself or to take a leisurely winter stroll; the day's task was to count as many birds as possible. Part of my job was to observe and identify without interfering or slowing down the pace of the experienced census takers in the group.

The organizer and compiler of the Wilmington bird count data is avid birder Sam Cooper. He says the true value of the counts is revealed when compared with other counts through the years: "Each count provides us with a small snapshot of what birds are in the same area year after year. We see patterns of species becoming more or less common over time."

Cooper notes that the data from the counts helps researchers understand a variety of issues critical to birds: patterns of migration, range expansion and contraction, habitat loss, disease, and other environmental factors. "Each count is like a small piece of a puzzle. When compared to other pieces, both locally and nationally, we can begin to put together an image of what's going on with the birds." Moreover, that data is available to anyone. Cooper says that the historical data is publicly available online through Audubon and USGS (United States Geological Survey) in an easily searchable digital database. So whether you're a high school student who wants to see how the red-winged blackbird population has fared in North Carolina in the last fifty years or a graduate student studying the migration patterns and population decline of red knot, the CBC data is there for you to use and cite.

After my first Christmas Bird Count (and subsequent thaw), I had one lingering thought: Why on Earth is this event scheduled in the winter? Wouldn't a warmer month be more appealing to census takers?

As it turns out, the winter scheduling of the census has its basis in history. Cooper explained that though hunting during the winter holidays

has long been an enjoyable American pastime for birders and non birders alike, in the eighteenth century, a Christmas tradition known as the "side-hunt" used to take place throughout the nation. The rules of the competition went something like this: Groups of hunters took sides against one another on Christmas Day. Each side then took to the woods and fields and shot everything feathered and furred they could hit. The idea was to have the highest death tally at day's end. What was galling to many early conservationists like ornithologist Frank M. Chapman were "reports of the hundreds of non-game birds which were sometimes slaughtered during a single hunt." To add insult to fatal injury, such tallies were often published and winners publicly commended in the leading sportsmen's journals of the time.

This indiscriminate slaughter of non-game birds so outraged Chapman that in 1900 he proposed an ambitiously optimistic alternative to the hunt he deemed the "Christmas bird census." That year a modest twenty-seven birdwatchers throughout the nation participated in the first year of Chapman's conservation-minded option. According to the National Audubon Society, this first census yielded counts of "18,500 individual birds and 89 bird species." The census, eventually renamed the "Christmas Bird Count," has steadily increased in popularity.

Today, the CBC is the largest and oldest citizen-science project in the nation. In 2013, a staggering 70,000 census takers in over 2,500 locations participated. Audubon notes that the data collected has been used in hundreds of studies and the historical data is used by "U.S. federal agencies as an important basis" regarding conservation policy.

After Cooper explained this history, I tried to imagine the scene at Greenfield Lake had I been there for a side hunt in 1850 instead of a census in the twenty-first century. This was at first sobering, given the rich variety of non-game birds we saw that day, and then heartening, for Frank M. Chapman's delightful alternative has prevailed. Counting the birds that ornament the trees is now one of my favorite ways to celebrate the season.

Want to go? The Christmas Bird Count is a venerable tradition open to anyone. However, it does require pre-registration. Visit www.audubon.org/content/join-christmas-bird-count to sign up with a group in your area. Let the organizer know your level of bird identification skill and fitness level, so you can be placed with the best group for you.

Author Virginia Holman teaches in the creative writing department at UNC Wilmington and occasionally guides with Kayak Carolina.

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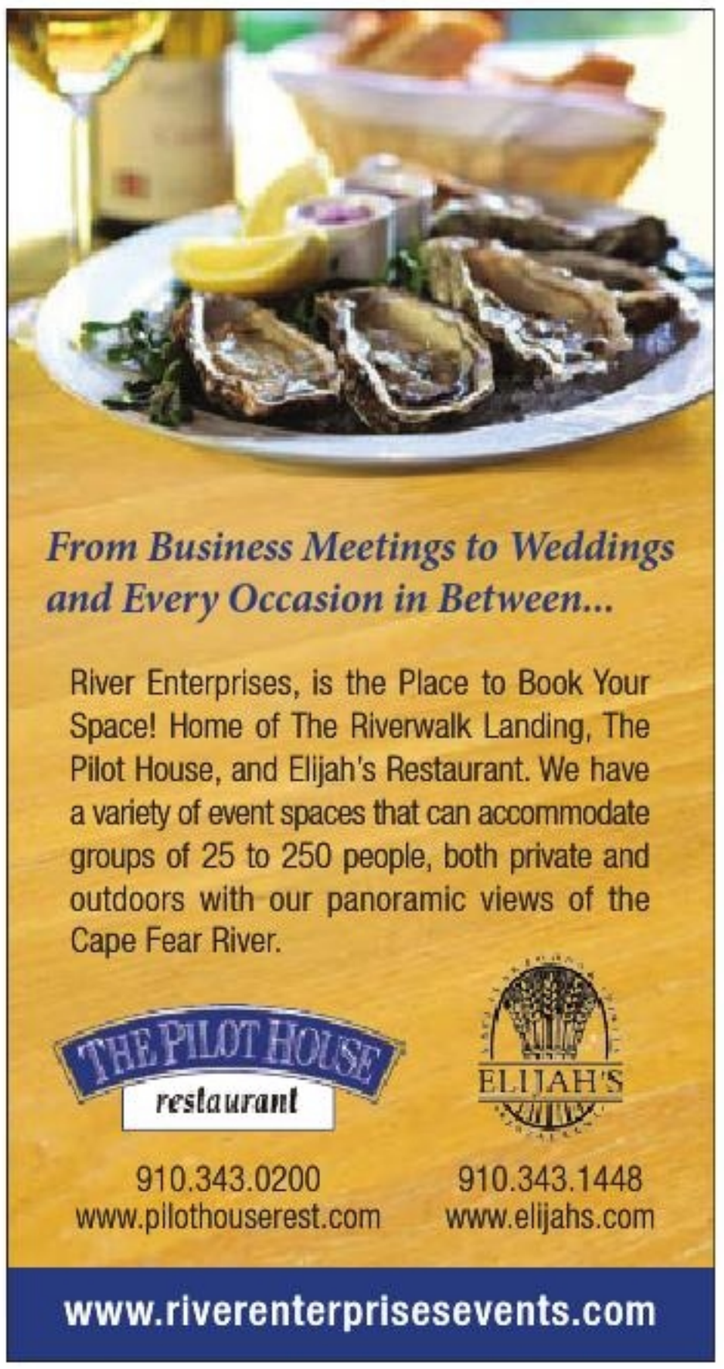
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Cold

My father knew it.
Each morning he made anew
blowing the coals into flames.
His hands braided it
over and under by the fire
until its warmth came slowly
then gave way to the red jewel glow
in the stove's belly.
The stove that stood on squat legs
with a mouth eager for logs
pine, oak, ash, hickory
anything to feed
the emptiness inside that melded
into heat making the room grow larger.
Moving us back into a larger circle,
taking heat where we needed to go . . .
the table, the other room
in sweaters, to bed
between sheets of ice
under a range of quilts
that hilled to the moon's light
through the window
so
cold.

— *Ruth Moose*

Sacred Light

Wherever it comes from, illumination is an act of love

By Jim Dodson

Photograph by Lynn Donovan

Photograph by Mark Holmberg

Photograph by Mark Steelman

Because I'm a habitual early riser and probably would have made a decent Medieval monk, morning light always seems special to me.

I might even say *sacred*.

First there is the small beeswax candle I light on my writing desk, a common act across the centuries — and every faith tradition — meant to symbolize the presence of the divine. By its light, I simply say a few grateful prayers and invite assistance from any kindly muse that happens to be passing through the neighborhood darkness.

On clear mornings before the sun comes up, I often follow our dogs out to the backyard with a cup of joe just to take in a different kind of light show from whichever stars or planets happen to be loitering over our darkened hilltop, aglitter like diamonds on black velvet, a sight that never fails to stir delicious puniness in this cosmic coffee-addicted pilgrim.

Finally comes the sunrise, sometimes rainy and subdued by low clouds, but more often than not a pageant of tinted clouds and golden rays painting the eastern horizon with heavenly light. Scant wonder young Henry Thoreau — Transcendental poet and fellow devoted early

PHOTOGRAPH BY NED LEARY

riser — was moved to say that morning light brings back the heroic ages.

Among God's first acts in creating this world, after all, was to flood it with light — and by my count there's no less than seventy-five mentions of light in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible.

Darkness — a metaphor often used for spiritual lostness — is one of the ten plagues Moses visited upon Pharaoh that ultimately persuaded him to release his Israeli captives. King David said the Lord was his "light and Salvation." St. Matthew said Jesus was "the light of the world."

Of course, everyone has his or her own definition of sacred light, especially this time of year when days grow short and nights grow long.

In pre-Christian times from Rome to Europe, roaring bonfires were built on the longest night of the year to illuminate an annual celebration of the winter solstice that typically included communal prayers and ceremonial dances, sharing of autumn's final bounty as a means of pressing back the darkness and facing the "dying of the light," as one ancient Celtic text describes it, "the coming of the bleakest days."

This year, once again, our grown kids will all wander home from afar for our family's winter solstice party that attracts old friends and new neighbors and curious newbies who drop in at dusk to read a poem, play a song, share a drink, perform a trick or simply spin a worthy tale for a long winter's night — all in exchange for seasonal beverages and my wife's homemade soup and legendary caramel cake. At this point, our annual solstice bash has gone on so long — it started with a group of us from church on a snowy night in Maine at

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW SHERMAN

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK STEELMAN

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW SHERMAN

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK STEELMAN

least twenty-five years ago — I've lost formal count of its age but not its purpose: to bring the joy of human light and fellowship to the darkest night of the year.

Just to be clear, we also hang a lighted Moravian star and string about a zillion white Christmas lights around the old house and grounds to heighten the effect.

Our effort at artificial illumination pales when compared to the ambitious lights you'll find, say, in McAdenville, North Carolina, a wee town of just over 600 souls that calls itself "Christmas Town USA" and lights more than 700 trees and 200 lampposts, a light show extravaganza that annually attracts more than half a million visitors who journey though the winter night to see the lights.

Speaking of journeys through the night, Christian churches put on their finest garb of greens and lights, Advent wreaths and illuminated trees, preparing for Christmas Eve services rendered even more magical by the soft light of burning tapers and ancient tidings of shepherds and sojourners who followed the light of a new star to a messiah.

This year, December 6 marks the beginning of Hanukkah, the Jewish Festival of Lights remembering the dedication of the second temple of Jerusalem in 160 BCE, marking the start of an eight-day period during which the faithful give small gifts to each other.

Being a spiritually blended family, we light a menorah, too, happy to have the extra sacred light — yet another reason to give thanks during a season of darkness.

As everyone from Plato to Ben Franklin has pointed out, beauty is invariably found in the eye of the beholder — and so, it follows, is one's own definition of sacred light.

To a new mother, the light in her newborn's eyes as they take in a dazzling new world must seem downright holy to behold.

Ditto the lights of home when one has been away far too long.

A campfire on a bone-chilling night.

Fireflies on a summer lawn.

An intimate dinner by candelight.

A rainbow after a thunderstorm.

Flickering votives in a darkened cathedral.

The Northern Lights — if you're ever fortunate enough to see them.

Fireworks over the water.

Morning sun through a kitchen window.

A walk at twilight.

Reading a book or a poem or even just a letter that stirs your heart can have this same effect of switching on the soul's track lights.

Quaker doctrine holds that every human being contains the light of God, a spark of the divine just waiting for the right moment to illuminate and shine.

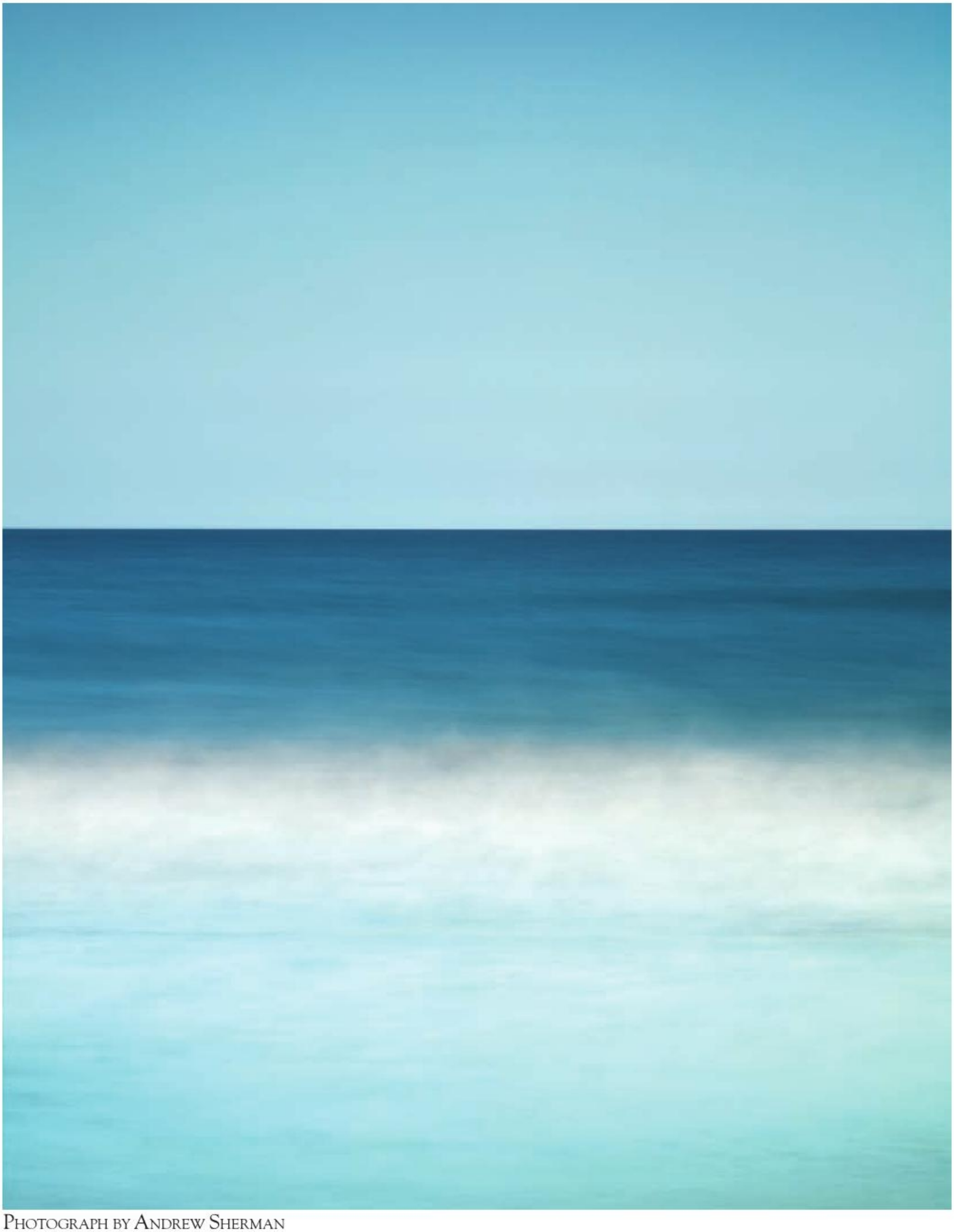
"All God needs is a crack in the door," writes spiritual writer Marianne Williamson. "The door is cracked. Illumination follows."

In his popular anthem for a flawed yet wondrous world forever in search of a savior, poet-songwriter Leonard Cohen seems to agree. "There is a crack in everything," he reminds us. "That's how the light gets in."

In this context — and the spirit of the season — we wondered how some of our favorite photographers see sacred light though the lens of their cameras.

Every gift of light, says the ancient Persian poet Rumi, is really an act of love.

We couldn't agree more.



PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW SHERMAN

The Landfall Foundation

With ancestral heartstrings that link it to some of Wilmington's most celebrated founding families, the city's quietest charitable organization reaches its silver anniversary in style

By Susan Taylor Block · Photograph by Mark Steelman

Despite having funneled a total of three million dollars into local causes over the past twenty-five years, the Landfall Foundation is perhaps best described as "the biggest charity you've never heard of." The organization's accurately placed gifts are sizable and the folks who run it are not prone to brag. But similar to almost any Southern story, the history of the Landfall Foundation began before it ever got started.

Like a verbal tweet, it went viral throughout the land of the Lower Cape Fear. In answer to a friend's question about a new wall being built around the affluent Landfall community in 1987, a Wilmington native responded with a twinkle in his eye, "Oh, that's where we keep our Yankees." The statement was made to amuse, and it did so, sending irrepressible ripples of laughter through certain folks who were beginning to experience civic growing pains.

However, Frank Hawkins Kenan, of Durham, an entrepreneur and seasoned philanthropist, did not think it so funny. Kenan, who died in 1996, was a sixth-generation descendant of Thomas S. Kenan (1700–1766), an Ulster Scot who arrived in Wilmington but settled in Duplin County about 1736. Thomas topped a family tree that included many strong, brilliant men of action.

After graduating from UNC in 1935, Frank Kenan moved to Durham to establish petroleum businesses: Kenan Transport, Kenan Oil and Tops. He served as CEO of the Flagler System in Palm Beach, as a trustee of funds left by Mary Lily Kenan Flagler, and had many other business responsibilities. Under his leadership, the Kenan Trust gave $42 million to endow eighty-eight professorial chairs.

But Frank Kenan's interest in Landfall was deeper than dollars. He was connected specifically to Landfall by ancestral heartstrings and a multigenerational network of friends.

His first cousin once removed, Mary Lily Kenan, was best friends with Mrs. Sarah Pembroke Jones. It was Sarah and the Joneses' housemate, Henry Walters, who introduced Mary Lily to Henry Morrison Flagler one capital day at Airlie — the "Hers" of the "His and Hers" properties

of Pembroke Park and Airlie. Mr. Flagler and Miss Kenan were married August 24, 1901, at Liberty Hall, in Kenansville. After Flagler's death in 1913, Mary Lily was considered the richest woman in the world.

It was during the Flagler marriage that portions of the old Cape Fear social network began gathering at Pembroke Park. In addition to the Revolutionary ties some held, others had Civil War connections, or were just part of the famous Wilmington cousinhood. And there they were: all gathered in the Italianate lodge, masterfully envisioned and generously financed by the Joneses' best friend, Henry Walters. Compared to its nearest sound-front neighbors, it must have looked for all the world as if it landed Oz-like, sent from Italy by Tornado-Express. If the pines of Landfall could talk, their needles would whisper memories of mirthful gatherings there.

The Flagler, Kenan, Moore, Kidder, MacRae, Bellamy, Murchison, Sprunt, Strange, Wright and other connected families clinked their crystal glasses and talked deep into the night at Pembroke Park. According to various sources, Enrico Caruso; actors and actresses from earliest days of "moving picture" industry; high-ranking Italian politicians; John D. Rockefeller, co-founder, with Flagler, of Standard Oil; and even Eleanor Roosevelt and FDR's Delano relatives paid visits, too.

Bishop Robert Strange was hugely popular with the group and may have been partially to "blame" for the eventual migration of a few Kenans of that day to the Episcopal Church. They enjoyed Bishop Strange's sermons so much that they risked the chastisement of their staunch Presbyterian elders by attending St. James whenever he was slated to speak. Frank Kenan, though, kept his love for the Presbyterian Church, and his respect for the religious discipline of his ancestors at Liberty Hall.

After Pembroke Jones died in 1919, Pembroke Jones Jr. inherited the hunting preserve, but did not care for it. Following his death in 1970, his niece Jane Pope Akers Ridgway began laying plans for an elegant development, but unfortunate conditions initiated by a few others caused her to lose interest. She sold the land to Chapel Hill developer J. P. Goforth. It was after Mr. Goforth's death that Frank Kenan bought his stake in Landfall: 50 percent of the available land on the 2,200-acre Jones estate. He wished to see Landfall emerge as one the South's finest neighborhoods. His desire to help make peace between the Wilmington establishment and the impressive "new kids on the block" birthed the Landfall Foundation.

Frank Kenan first spoke with Al Newsom about the Landfall Foundation in 1994. According to Thomas S. Kenan III, Frank's son, Al Newsom was Frank's dearest friend, and his "eyes and ears" in the community. "My father wanted Landfall to become part of Wilmington and to support worthy causes outside the neighborhood. His last dreams were the creation of the Landfall Foundation and the Landfall Chapel, but he died before the Chapel was built," said Thomas.

Frank Kenan died in 1996, but not before he built a house in Landfall that he named "Culloden," after his Scottish Presbyterian ancestry. Keeping a residence in the community served as a symbol of his faith in the development. Kenan had taken over and upgraded the Landfall shopping area to bring a sparkle to the development. He gave $50,000 to the Landfall Foundation as the first contribution and pledged to give $50,000 more if his gift was matched. He died soon after that, but his widow, Betty, and their family lived up to his pledge to the Landfall Foundation.

Al Newsom was actually one of three men who spearheaded the Landfall Foundation. Almost immediately, Al recruited another friend, Mat White. As so often it happens at Landfall, the conversation began over golf. "I was on the driving range," said Mat, "and Al walked over and said in his inimitable way, 'Do you know anything about charitable foundations?'" Neither of them did, but that changed fast. They drew in another friend, Dick McGraw, completing a trio-terrific. Though diverse in specific talents, all three men are observant, analytical, had stellar careers, and have a military air about them.

Al and Mat assembled the charter board of directors, with Mat as president; Al as vice-president; and Dick as a third principal.

The trio named Al Weaver as secretary and Earl Wells as treasurer. Other directors were Jean Rosenberg and Allan Wilson. They started by creating a mission statement: "The purpose of the Foundation is to provide financial support to charitable organizations and activities in the greater Wilmington area and New Hanover County."

"It has been inspiring to work with nonprofits in the greater Wilmington area for the past twenty years. Together we have not only improved and enhanced the quality of life for many people, I think we have also encouraged a greater spirit of philanthropy throughout the community."

Marilyn Gunther,
President of the Landfall Foundation

The board worked with Frank Kenan's attorneys for eighteen months to set up the Foundation's tax-free status and to define their target recipients. They aimed to help lesser-known causes, ones that were not already recipients through United Way or other group charities. Board members also studied each organization's financial status and what they were doing to accomplish their own goals. As Dick McGraw stated, "We sought out, we went looking for small effective organizations. We wanted the money to go where no one else's was. We wanted to make a difference."

According to Mat White, "Members serve as the Foundation's 'arms and legs,' by collecting contributions and then delivering them to the chosen organizations. The difference has been profound in certain situations." Early recipients like Dreams, Autism Speaks, The Children's Museum, Interfaith Hospitality Network, and the Tileston Clinic are good examples. Following the devastation of Hurricane Floyd in 1999, the Foundation gave money and other forms of currency to those who suffered great loss: blankets, clothes, and toiletries that were distributed straight from the hands of the members.

Today, the generosity and effect of the Landfall Foundation continues to grow. This year, the Foundation's silver anniversary, $360,000 is being distributed to seventy-seven recipients. Since its inception, the Landfall Foundation has now given over $3 million to worthy causes. Much of this money was given by individuals who attend the black tie gala at Landfall, sponsored by the Foundation.

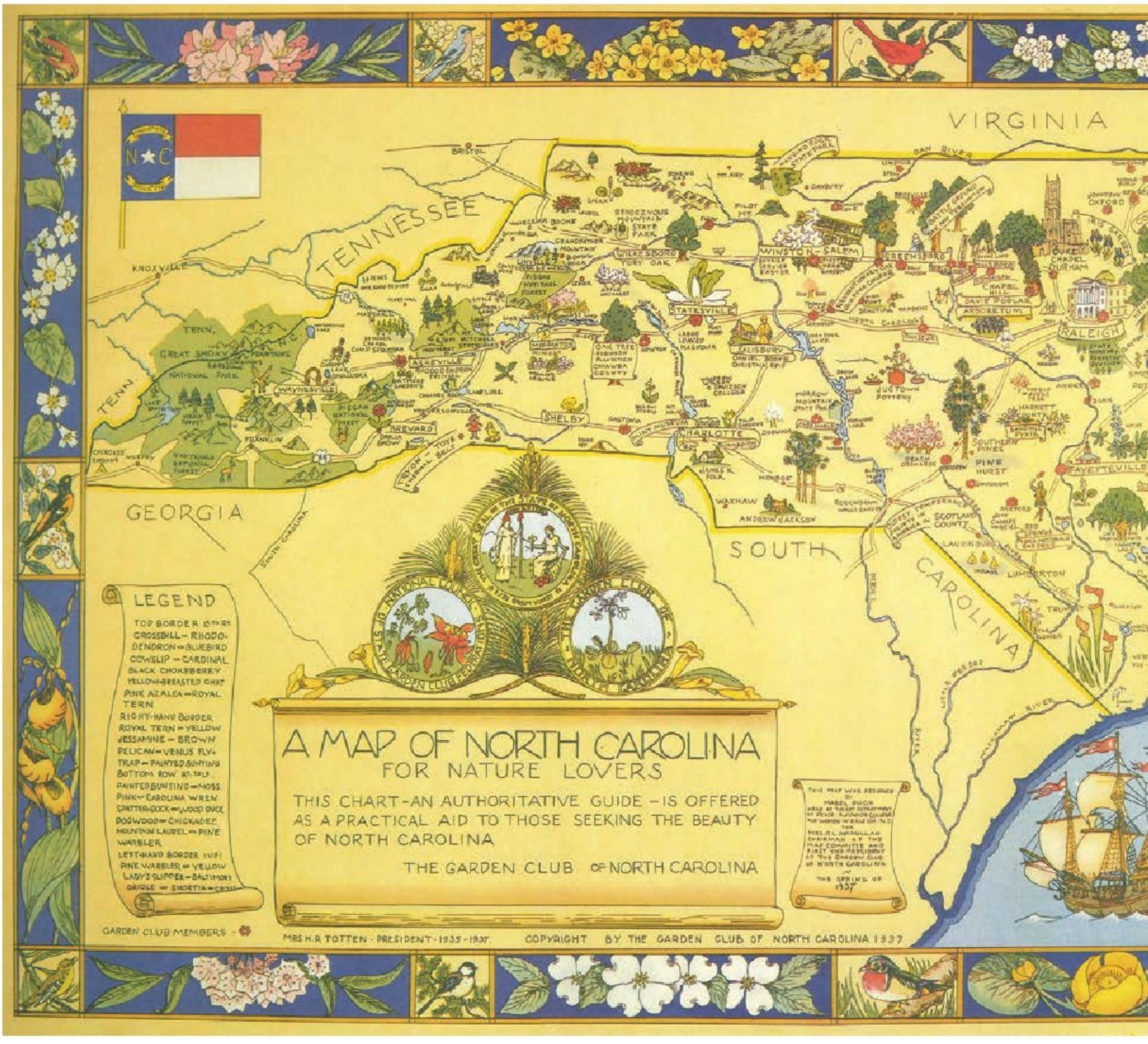
So, the tail-wagging-the-dog neighborhood thrives, and as it does so, Wilmington benefits. Maybe now the wall just delineates a place where some of Wilmington's all-time most generous people have chosen to live. Frank Hawkins Kenan would be pleased.

Susan Taylor Block is a Wilmington native and Carolina fan who enjoys taking walks and studying local history.

THE STATE OF
Our Gardens

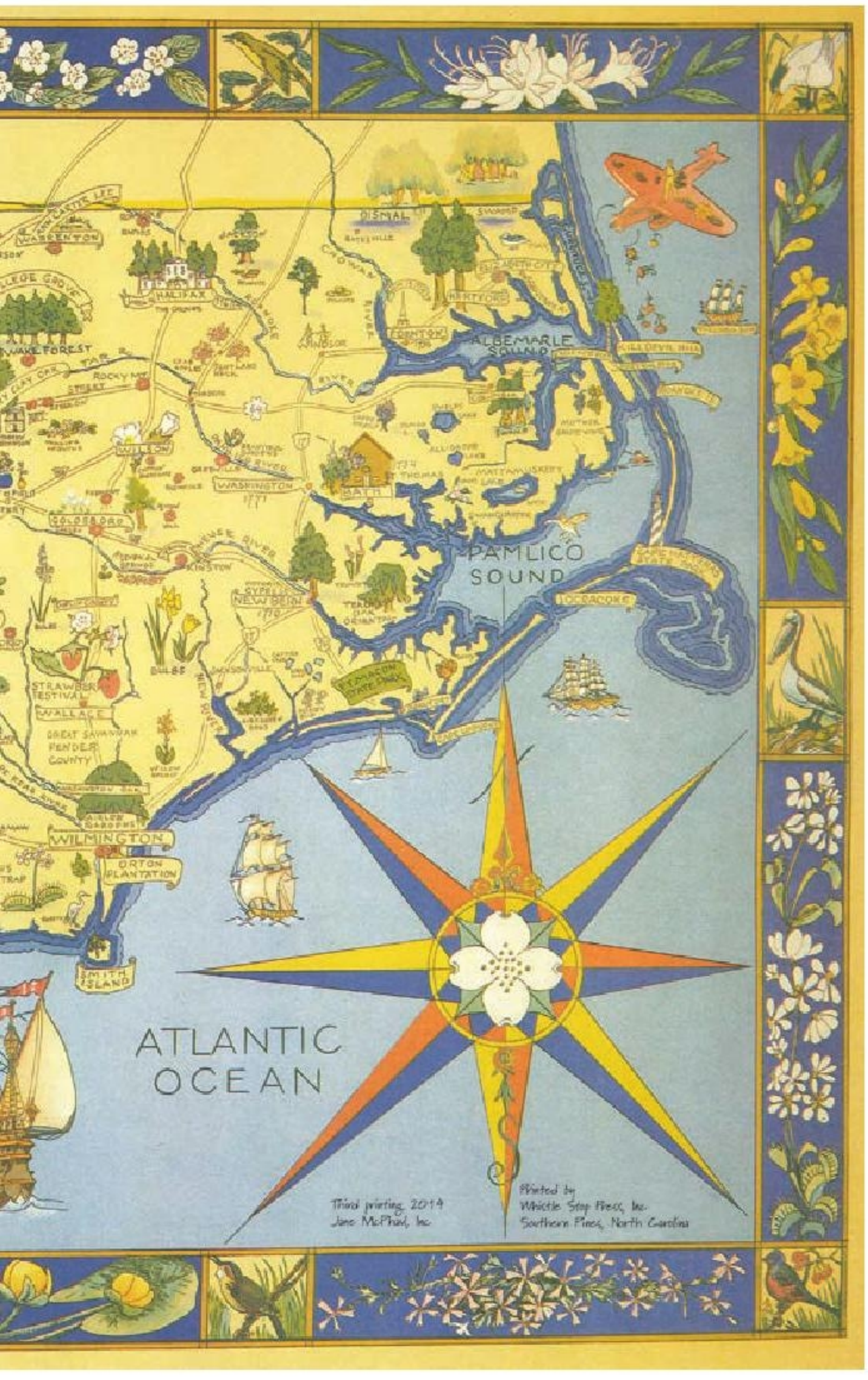
A beautiful map of North Carolina's incomparable flora is a treasure for nature lovers

By Serena Brown



"Close your eyes and hold out your hands with the palms down," said Jane McPhaul, life member of the Garden Club of North Carolina, Inc. (GCNC) and designer of the North Carolina Garden for the Martha Franck Fragrance Garden. McPhaul held cardboard reliefs under my hands and asked me to guess what they depicted. I managed one — a cardinal. Another I thought might be a map of the state of North Carolina, but I couldn't be sure enough to say so.

Those who are visually impaired face these challenges countless times every day. My fumbling guesses would have been accurate certainties to one not reliant on sight for recognition.



At the Martha Franck Fragrance Garden the blind have the opportunity to enjoy a garden where the other senses are foremost in the design. The garden is located at the Governor Morehead School for the Blind (GMS). As well as enhancing the beauty of the campus, it serves as a much-loved outdoor classroom. Students can stroke lamb's ear and grasses in the Texture Garden, breathe deeply of the fragrance of antique roses in the Rose Garden, and listen to the rustle of pine and magnolia in the Woodland Garden. They may even feel the wonder of a swallowtail from the Butterfly Garden landing on their skin.

Brick walkways with raised edges guide the students around the gardens. At the Keller Memorial Garden, scented with gardenia, there is a bust of Helen Keller and, written in Braille and English, are her words: "When one door of happiness closes, another one opens."

The Martha Franck Fragrance Garden is a co-operative project between the GMS and the GCNC. The organizations have been working together since 1960, when the original Martha Franck Fragrance Garden was located in Durham County, North Carolina. Now they are working toward installing the North Carolina Garden, an octagonal walled garden with granite surround walls. Those walls will have beveled top surfaces of tactile images of select symbols of the state: box turtle, cardinal, channel bass, dogwood, pine, Plott hound, Scotch bonnet shell and squirrel. On alternate wall surfaces will be more tactile designs: the North Carolina seal, toast, flag and map.

The GCNC's state map for nature lovers is also decorated with important flora and fauna. The dogwood is there, and the cardinal, as well as jessamine and oxlip, the brown pelican and pink azalea. The interior of the map, which was first printed in 1937, is decorated with symbols of the places depicted. There are laurels at Boone and rhododendrons at Roaring Gap. The Battleground Oak prevails at Guilford. Peach orchards and a longleaf pine decorate the Sandhills. Weavers work at their looms at Crossnore, and the Washington Oak stands resplendent over Wilmington. Square-masted ships sail the Atlantic Ocean, and an aeronautical acrobat scatters flowers over the Outer Banks from the wings of a little plane.

McPhaul made and sketched out the conceptual design for the North Carolina Garden in 2002. Last year she instituted a third printing of the GCNC's map, with print sales benefiting the fund for the building of the North Carolina Garden.

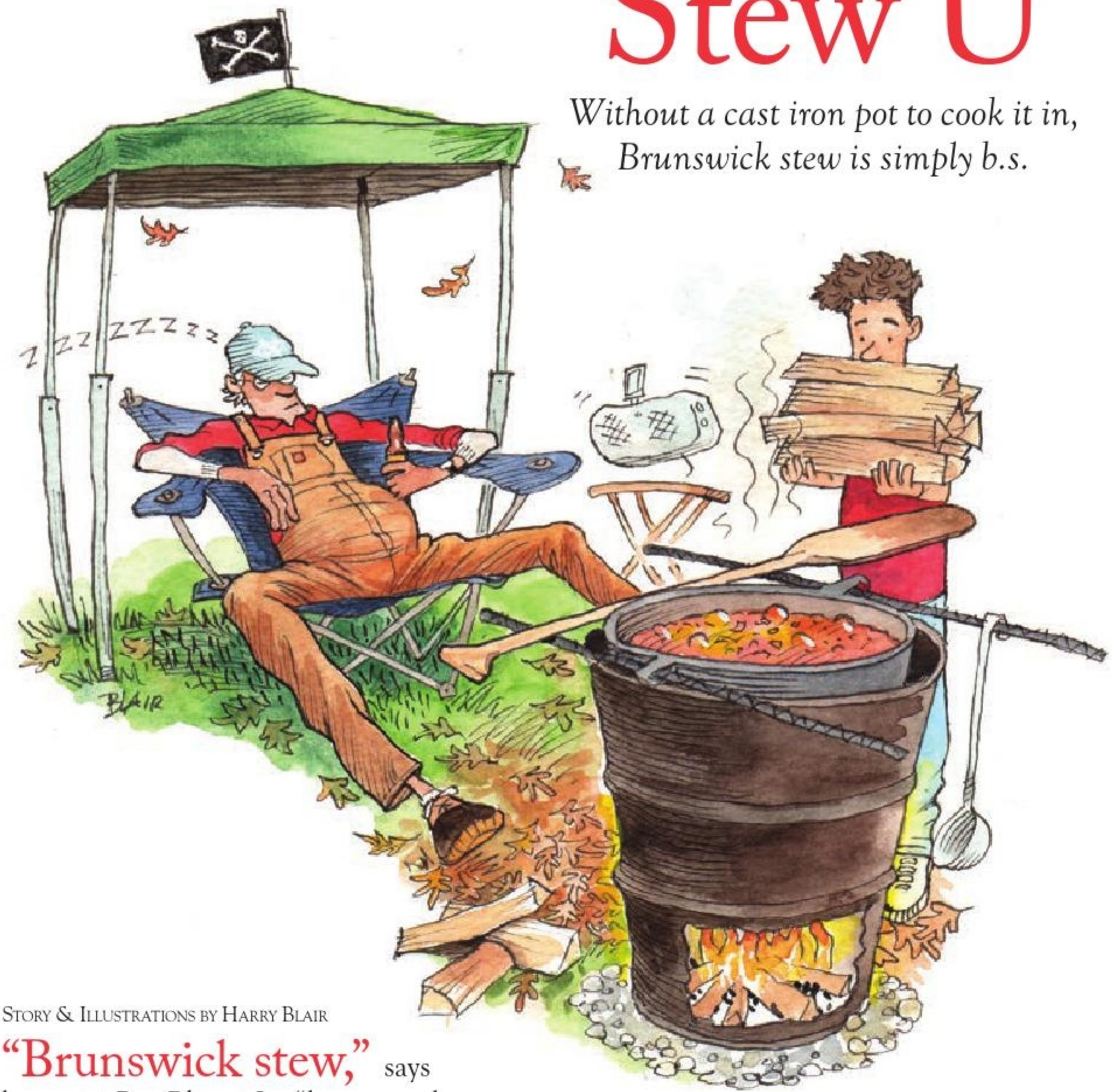
"The map is great for teaching," says McPhaul, pointing out how much of the state's history is illustrated in the artwork. "It is 'A Map of North Carolina for Nature Lovers,' and you can't beat that ecologically or environmentally . . . It's important."

The prints make wonderful presents, too. They are a treasure for anyone who has ever loved any part of the state. Next to the map's legend is a description. It reads "This chart — an authoritative guide — is offered as a practical aid to those seeking the beauty of North Carolina." In the sighted finding that beauty on the map, so the students at GMS will be given a practical aid to finding the state's beauty in their gardens.

The map is printed on recycled, acid-free 65-pound paper in full color antique matte finish at 24 by 14 inches. To order a map, contact Jane McPhaul, at jhmcphaul@nc.rr.com or (910) 692-7272. Maps are $30; shipping for up to three maps to the same address is $10. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the Martha Franck Fragrance Garden.

Stew U

Without a cast iron pot to cook it in,
Brunswick stew is simply b.s.



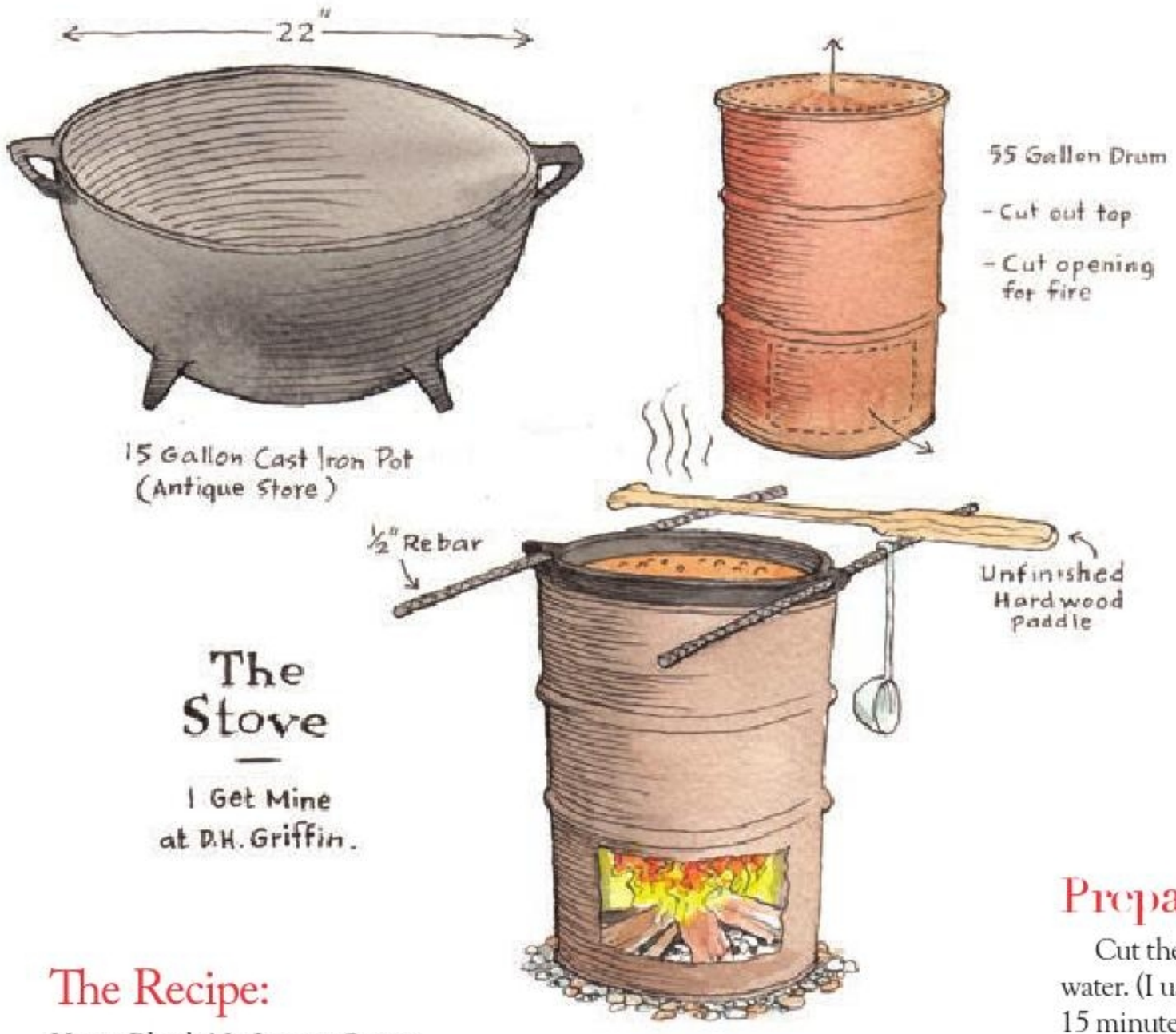
Story & Illustrations by Harry Blair

"Brunswick stew," says humorist Roy Blount Jr., "happens when small mammals carrying ears of corn fall into barbecue pits." Whether it occurs accidentally or on purpose, it's a big part of winter in most of North Carolina.

Twenty-five years ago, I got my recipe for Brunswick stew from a dear friend, Fran Walters, who got it from an older lady, who got it from another older lady, and so on. It's pretty old. And it's basically an Eastern North Carolina style that has been perfected over generations here in the Piedmont. There are as many variations on Brunswick stew as there are Brunswick stew cooks. Both Stamey's and Country Barbecue put peas in theirs. Go figure.

You can't fake genuine Brunswick stew. You can't make it in a crockpot. You can't make it in a couple of hours on the stove. It has to cook all day — outdoors — over a hardwood fire. It has to be stirred constantly and the fire has to be kept hot. Like I said, all day. This recipe cooks for ten hours. It's hard work, but the result is Lord-have-mercy worth it.

This year, my grandson Hudson will start to take it over. He'll be involved in the whole process, from shopping for ingredients to serving. I wrote this up to serve as his instructions — or yours, if you want to start a new tradition at your house, church or fire station. So let's get on with it. As my friend Bob Garner would say, "Mmm-mmm!"



The Stove

I Get Mine at D.H. Griffin.

The Recipe:

Harry Blair's No-Longer-Secret,
Smack Yo' Granny Brunswick Stew / Serves 60

Ingredients:

10 pounds deboned and skinned chicken breasts (remove fat)

5 pounds deboned and skinned chicken thighs (remove fat)

4 pounds lean pork (Boston butt or a fresh picnic ham will work if you cut off the fat. Or get your butcher to trim and cut the meat for you.)

4 pounds lean beef (Use stew beef or get chuck roast or round, but remove the fat. Venison, rabbit, squirrel, possum, snake or bear gives the stew a good backstory. Heck, I even added reindeer one year.)

1/2 pound country ham (chopped)

8 pounds peeled Yukon Gold potatoes, cut into quarters

2 extra large yellow onions, chopped

1 bunch celery, chopped

6 garlic cloves, finely chopped

5 28-ounce cans of crushed tomato

2 29-ounce cans of tomato sauce

4 15-ounce cans of chicken broth

1/3 box Bell's Seasoning

Dash crushed red pepper

1 tablespoon ground black pepper

1/4 cup salt

Six hours into cooking, add:

5 15-ounce cans of whole kernel corn (and liquid)

5 15-ounce cans of Lima beans (and liquid)

1 stick salted butter

Equipment:

First thing: Treasure the pot. I found mine in a dark corner of an antique store outside Stuart, Virginia. It's the perfect size, 15-gallon. It just fits in one open end of a 55-gallon drum, which becomes the stove. It will make enough stew for fifty or sixty people.

The stove will eventually rust and fall apart every few years. D.H. Griffin will sell you a new drum and cut out the holes on the top and side of it for you.

Then, you need to find yourself a paddle-like stirrer with a rounded end. You will also need two 1/2-inch-thick pieces of rebar cut to 4 feet, which you will use to carry the pot and hang utensils on. You're going to also need two or three large stockpots in which to boil the meat.

That should do it as far as equipment goes. Go ahead and put the pot in the open end of the unlit stove. The stove should be sitting on a bed of gravel far away from dry leaves or anything flammable. And keep a fire extinguisher nearby. OK. Let's get on with it!

Preparation:

Cut the meat into 2-inch or so chunks. Fill the stockpots 2/3 full of water. (I use two, one 12-quart and one 18-quart.) Add meat and boil for 15 minutes on your kitchen stove. Skim off the foam that comes to the top and discard.

Put the meat into a large bowl. Carry the remaining stock outside and pour it into the pot.

Build the fire by putting five or six bricks into the bottom of the stove. Place a small bag of Kingsford Match Light charcoal on the bricks. Make a teepee of wood sticks around the bag. Light the bag. To keep a good, hot fire going all day, you'll need a fair amount of nicely split oak, hickory or other firewood (no pine). I get mine from Harris Teeter.

Go back inside to the meat. Shred the meat in a food processor or cut it up by hand, but not too fine. Dump it into the pot outside, making sure your fire is good and hot. Stir.

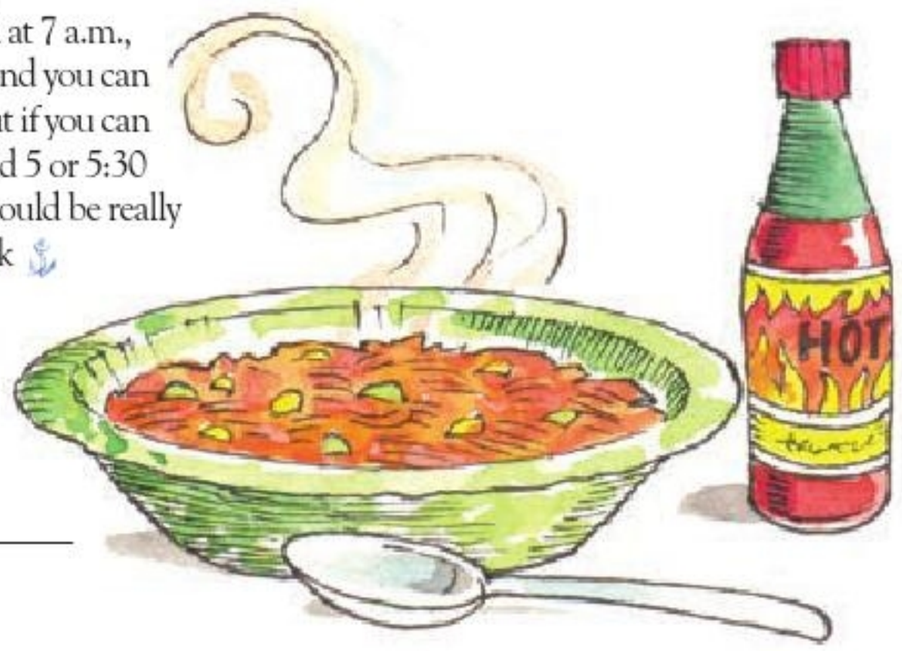
Add everything else EXCEPT corn, beans and butter. The mixture should come to within 2 inches of the top of the pot. If it doesn't, add some water. Throughout the cooking process, you'll see it come to a boil. That's good, just keep stirring.

Cook seven hours over a very hot fire, stirring every 10 minutes so it doesn't scorch on the bottom.

Add the corn, lima beans, butter and juice. If the stew needs more liquid, now's the time to add chicken broth to help fill the pot.

Cook and stir over a very hot fire another two hours.

If you started at 7 a.m., it's now 4 p.m. and you can start serving. But if you can wait until around 5 or 5:30 p.m. the stew should be really good — and thick



A Tale of Two Historians

A textured love affair

By Mark Holmberg · Photographs by Rick Ricozzi

The city architectural record from many years ago was rather bland about 302 Forest Hills Drive:

"The Price House. Two-story Colonial Revival style brick residence . . . Built (1940) for Kelly W. Price, auditor of freight receipts for Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, and his wife, Blanche W. Price."

Now it could be written more vibrantly:

The LaVere House, a Ralph Lauren-textured love affair and Christmas marvel shaped by Karyn and David LaVere, two completely different kinds of historians.

This wild new chapter for 302 Forest Hills began thirteen years ago inside The Shanakee Irish Pub (now The Copper Penny) on a trivia night, one of David's faves.

"He was there to be smart. I was there to have fun," Karyn recalled as we sat around her grandparents' antique dining table on yet another rainy fall day in Wilmington. (Perhaps in these two short sentences, I would begin to guess, Karyn quickly summed up their historical and life specialties. But don't start humming the theme to *The Odd Couple* just yet.)

Something clicked that night, and David invited this bright fun-lover to journey with him on a less-than-sparkly freelance writing gig for *Our State* magazine: exploring the old churches of North Carolina.

"Would you like to see the church in Bath?" he recalled asking her.

Surprisingly, she accepted, and thus began their "courting by driving" — he fascinated by the old and she enamored with finding new ways to use old things.

He is Dr. David LaVere, longtime UNCW history professor, New Orleans native and noted author of books like *The Tuscarora War: Indians, Settlers and the Fight for the Carolina Colonies* and *The Lost Rocks: The Dare Stones and the Unsolved Mystery of Sir Walter Raleigh's Lost Colony.* (The History Channel looked into the latter.)

She is a former proud "stock boy for Ralph Lauren" from Appleton, Wisconsin, who had just moved here to be closer to family when the courtship began.

They married ten years ago and David quickly discovered his wife's incredible passion for remodeling, décor, crafts, bargain-hunting, repurposing and yes, of course, Christmas.

"We have two different tastes in art," he said as we walked through the amazing living room. "I'm probably much more of a minimalist."

He looked around the pleasantly busy room. "How many fox hunting pictures can you have?"

I counted twenty on the walls, along with wooden stirrups, old riding helmets, various stacks of antique valises, an old spotlight from the Wrigley Building in Chicago, a baby grand piano, a giant antique loudspeaker, a steel-wheeled railroad cart for a coffee table and the beginnings of the Christmas decorations, among so many other touches showing her Ralph Lauren-inspired love of texturing.

"Thank God she has good taste," he said.

Yes, he's smart — smart enough to let it all happen. Somehow, it all fits together, and he knows it.

And it feels like it slowly, organically grew there over the decades, instead of just the solitary year since they bought 302 in a short sale.

They had finished transforming their first home together, 1520 Chestnut Street (including adding a saltwater swimming pool), and Karyn felt the itch.

"I like to move every five years or so," she said. "I get bored."

The new place was a "blank slate," Karyn said, very plain save for irritatingly dappled walls.

"It needed love," David said.

But it was right down the street from her daughter's home on Metts Avenue, close enough for the two young granddaughters to walk. ("I always wanted daughters," David said happily.)

So Karyn rolled up her layered sleeves and went to work. Contractors were brought in to add layers of trim and ornate ceiling details, but it was Karyn who did the Ralph Lauren wallpapering and painting, her husband pointed out proudly.

Much of the wall coverings came out of Karyn's vast stash from a lifetime as decorative historian, deal-seeker and a Ralph Lauren worker who took advantage of every employee discount and liquidation.

"I'm not a hoarder," she said, "but a supplier of beauty . . . I still have rolls and rolls of wallpaper."

And just about anything else you can imagine. Fabulously worn Oriental rugs — "I want the ones with the holes in 'em" — samplers from the 1800s, a wall hanging she made from chair springs and a metal calf mask, cigar rollers, antique fishing line, an old Russian restaurant coffeepot and dozens of photographs of strangers looking out from the distant past.

"We go to auctions and buy pictures of people we don't know," Karyn said. "If they make me laugh and smile, I put them up."

Which is why you're greeted by one hundred faces in a downstairs bathroom.

Some things stay, others wind up at her booth at Uptown Market Antiques and Uncommon Goods.

She loves being able to supply others with that perfect thing from her years of careful collecting.

"I really like anything that's free. We raided a cotton field the other day," she said, which explained the bouquet of cotton stems serving as the dining table's centerpiece.

"I never buy anything unless it's 75 percent off," she said, "and then I buy fifteen to twenty at a time."

She repaints, repurposes, blends, mixes and textures.

It is what 302 Forest Hills has become.

This love of history and texturing positively erupts in her passion for Christmas.

Not bright lights, mind you, but little antique sleighs and reindeer and whimsical decorations from generations ago.

David estimates there will be three dozen Christmas trees up by the time

302 is open for the Old Wilmington by Candlelight Tour on December 5 and 6, and they host their annual epic Christmas party a week later.

But these are not your typical trees.

Karyn made a little one out of bed springs. Another is shaped of stacked antique funnels. Others are made of sticks, feathers, Spanish moss, pine cones, sweet gum balls, along with some of more traditional materials, such as tinsel and shiny old Christmas balls, but with twists, of course.

David's favorite is the one made of keepsakes and symbols from his team — the New Orleans Saints — mixed with stuff from her Green Bay Packers.

But that one, Karyn pointed out, "doesn't go with the décor." So it will be relegated to his much-more traditional office above the garage.

David is fine with that, although he looks a little wistful when I ask him what art he has contributed to the main house. He pointed to two small paintings above the kitchen exit depicting a lord and lady he fancied in Colonial Williamsburg.

But he's smart. He knows this kind of history is not his specialty. The only limitation he has insisted upon is that Christmas decorating can only commence once it has been cold enough outside to see your breath.

But when Karyn said she'll likely be ready to move again once all the loving and historic texturing is done at 302, David did a little more digging in.

"They'll probably have to carry me out of here," he said. "I like this one."

This love of history and texturing positively erupts in her passion for Christmas.

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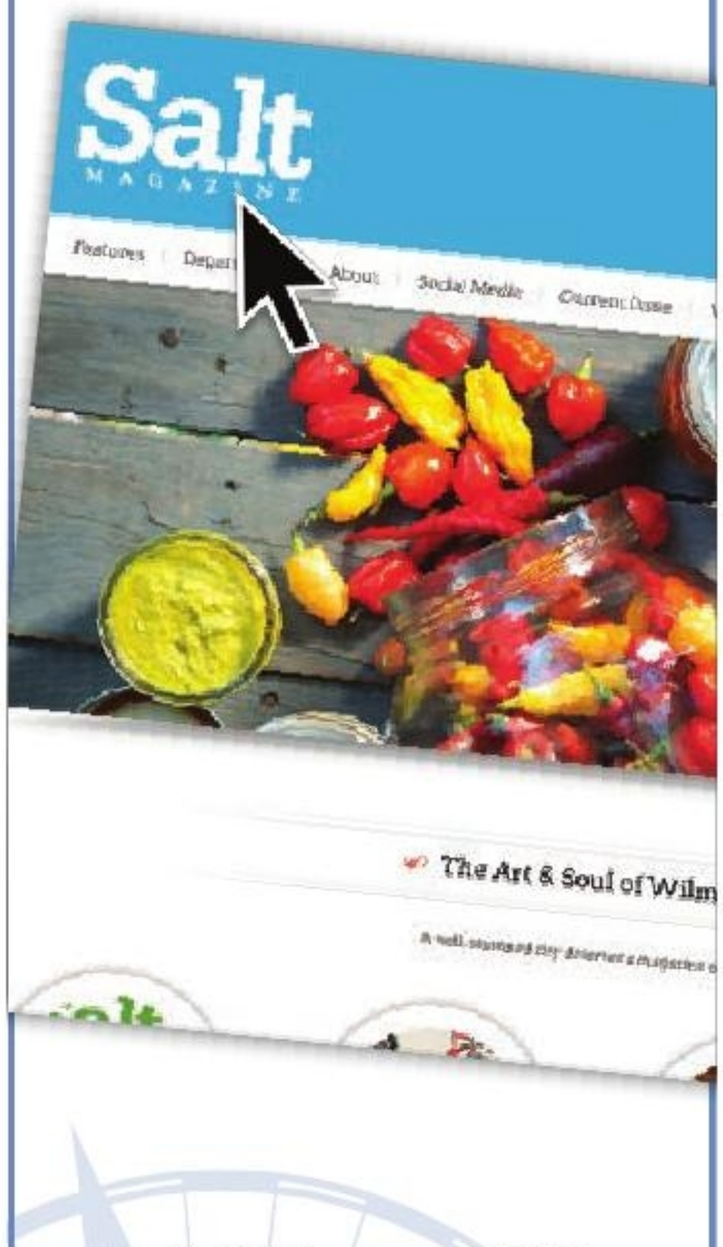

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ALMANAC

December

By Rosetta Fawley

Nescis quid vesper vehat.
Roman proverb, quoted by Macrobius, *Saturnalia*,
"Thou knowest not what evening may bring."

How true. They were clever chaps, those ancient Romans. They had the Pantheon, under-floor heating and succinct party philosophy.

December was the silly season for them too. They celebrated Saturnalia, the forerunner of Christmas. It was the festival of Saturn, the god of seeds and sowing. Beginning on December 17 in the Julian calendar, the festival lasted several days and featured a sacrifice at the Temple of Saturn followed by days — and nights — of feasting, drinking and celebration until December 23.

Slaves were honored with a dinner served by their masters, and were permitted to speak freely. Both slave and master were allowed to gamble, either among themselves or with each other if they chose.

Gifts were exchanged during the Sigillaria on December 19. However, since class and status were supposed to be suspended, the gifts tended to be modest and universal; often they were *sigillaria*, wax or pottery figures made especially for the festival.

**

The Romans chose a good time to celebrate the god of seeds. Now is the moment to look over your garden and plan for next year's harvest. Your kale, cabbage and collards will probably still be producing winter greens. Hooray. Now, between turkey leftovers and Saturnalian hangovers, put your feet up and leaf through a seed catalog or ten.

Consider investing in a cold frame to extend your growing season. If the budget is tight, as it tends to be at this time of year, then think about building a frame. It's really just a box with a sloping glass lid. Look out for old windows at yard sales and flea markets. Apart from practicality, they're more attractive than modern options. You want something no wider than a couple of feet to be sure that you can reach all the plants inside when you're gardening. Build a frame from wood that won't rot — black locust, cedar, cypress, white oak and redwood are all species resistant to decay; again, keep an eye out for scrap at lumberyards.

On very cold nights it's worth throwing a blanket over the cold frame to give an extra layer of warmth. Gardeners tend to be hardy types, but if the temperatures really drop, then you might want to indulge in an extra blanket for yourself too. Should we have a warm snap, open the lid during the day. You don't want temperatures higher than about 70–75 degrees. Not for the plants, anyway.

Gardeners and Romans aren't the only ones with their minds on seeds this season. If our feathered friends could choose from a catalog over the winter months, they'd probably go for sunflower seeds and white proso millet. If you use commercial bird foods, read the ingredients carefully. Be sure to avoid mixtures that use golden millet, red millet or flax as fillers. Most birds don't like these and they will avoid them. The resulting leftovers develop fungus and bacteria, spoiling the food the birds would want.

You can also put out suet, fruit and peanuts. With all foods, keep an eye on the birds' consumption and keep your bird table clean to avoid the growth of bacteria. And fatty foods, such as suet or peanut butter, should be removed in the warmth of the sun. The melting fat can clog birds' plumage, making it difficult for them to fly and to maintain their body temperature.

If you're boiling eggs to devil for the party season, keep the shells and crush them into small pieces. It may sound like a strange thing to feed to birds, but they're a good source of calcium and protein, which they need during the winter because there are fewer insects for them to feed on.

Once the temperatures drop below freezing, remember to put out shallow dishes of water so that birds can drink and clean their feathers. They need fresh water every day. The ancient Romans probably felt the same at this time of year.

**

For those whose birthdays fall on January 1, it's difficult to get together a party when all your friends and family are hung over and zealously following the first day of their New Year resolutions. Take heart, you're in exalted company. Other greats who celebrated quietly with an Alka-Seltzer include:

John Smith (1580–1631)
Paul Revere (1735–1818)
Betsy Ross (1752–1836)
E.M. Forster (1879–1970)
J.D. Salinger (1919–2010)

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
Whether the summer clothe the general earth
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch
Smokes in the sun-thaw; whether the eave-drops fall
Heard only in the trances of the blast,
Or if the secret ministry of frost
Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
Quietly shining to the quiet Moon.
From *Frost at Midnight*, by Samuel Taylor Coleridge

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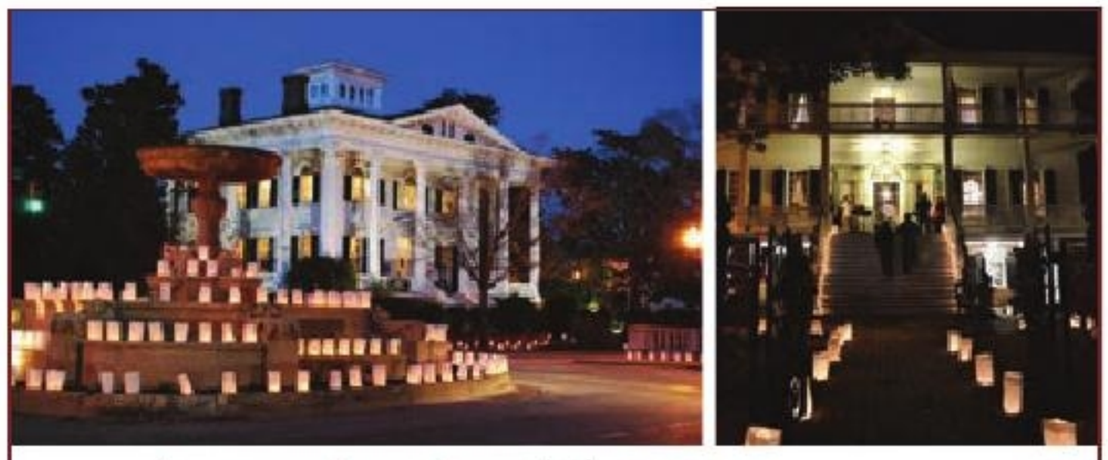

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Arts Calendar

Landfall Holiday Market

12/1

Manor House Candlelit Tour

12/3-5

Ballet for Young Audiences

12/4-5

Jingle Bell Run

12/12

December 2015

12/1 Swing'n the Holidays
4 & 7:30 p.m. The UK's number one jive and swing band, The Jive Aces, perform a holiday concert with special guests The Satin Dollz. Admission: $22–40. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

12/1 Holiday Marketplace
4–8 p.m. Shopping extravaganza featuring seasonal gifts, home décor and more starting at $10. Includes hors d'oeuvres and cash bar. Admission: $20. Proceeds benefit the Landfall Foundation. Country Club of Landfall, 800 Sun Runner Place, Wilmington. Info: www.landfallfoundation.org.

12/1–6 Festival of Trees
9 a.m. – 5 p.m. A winter wonderland of trees sponsored and decorated by local businesses and organizations. Admission: $8.95–10.95. Proceeds benefit Lower Cape Fear Hospice & Life Care Center. NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher, 900 Loggerhead Road, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 796-8099 or www.lcfhfoundation.org.

12/1–6 Bread & Lights Festival
10 a.m. – 6 p.m. (Monday – Sunday); 10 a.m. – 9 p.m. (Wednesday – Thursday). Gingerbread and lantern festival and fundraiser. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or breadandlights.org.

12/1–8 Make Week
4–5:30 p.m. Sample workshops at CAM Museum School for kids ages 6–10. Turn simple objects into decorative ornaments. Supplies provided. Instructor: Georgia Mastroieni. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

12/1–24 Santa at Mayfaire
11 a.m. – 3 p.m. & 4–7 p.m. (Monday – Saturday); 12–5 p.m. (Sunday). Capture your child's visit with Santa. Professional photos available. Santa Village at Mayfaire, 1055 International Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 256-5131 or www.mayfairetown.com.

12/1–27 Train & Light Spectacular
6:30–8 p.m. One-of-a-kind train and light show. Admission: $5. Wilmington Railroad Museum, 505 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 763-2634 or www.wrrm.org/events.html

12/3 Jingle with the Jellies
6–8:30 p.m. Special thank-you event for sponsors of the Cape Fear Festival of Trees and special guests with drinks and hors d'oeuvres. NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher, 900 Loggerhead Road, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 796-8099 or www.lcfhfoundation.org/event/cape-fear-festival-trees.

12/3 Greenfield Park Tree Lighting
6 p.m. Tree lighting at the "world's largest rotary wheel" followed by a screening of *Elf* at the Amphitheater, visits with Santa, and activities with Toys for Tots. Free. Greenfield Lake Park, 1941 Amphitheater Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 341-4602 or www.wilmingtonnc.gowv.

12/3 Ballet for Young Audiences
7 p.m. *Cinderella*. Admission: $15–20. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

12/3–5 Candlelit Tours
6, 7 & 8 p.m. Guided tours of the Manor House and twilight evenings in the pines. Admission: $5–12. Poplar Grove Plantation, 10200 US Highway 17 North, Wilmington. Info: (910) 686-9518 or www.poplargrove.org.

12/3–6 Youth Theatre
7 p.m. (Thursday – Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). Thalian Association's Youth Theatre presents the classic musical *Babes in Toyland*. Admission: $12. Hannah Block Second Street Stage, 120 South Second Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-1788 or www.thalian.org.

12/3–6 Live Theatre
8 p.m. (Thursday – Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). Big Dawg Productions presents *Christmas Belles*. Admission: $16–22. Cape Fear Playhouse, 613 Castle Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 367-5237 or www.bigdawgproductions.org.

New Year's Cruise

12/31

Winter Bridal Expo

1/10

Seaglass Salvage Market

1/15-17

NC Symphony Concert

1/19

12/4 Island of Lights Parade
7:30–10 p.m. Exquisite holiday procession featuring nighttime displays, floats, live music and a visit from Santa. Free. Atlanta Avenue & South Lake Park Boulevard, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-5507 or www.pleasureislandoflights.com.

12/4 & 5 Ballet for Young Audiences
7–8 p.m. New York's Ballet For Young Audiences' narrated version of *The Nutcracker*. Admission: $15–20. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

12/4–6 Live Theatre
7:30 p.m. (Friday & Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). Panache Theatrical Productions presents *Santaland Diaries*. Also runs December 11–13 & 18–20. Admission: $25. Red Barn Studio Theatre, 1122 South Third Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-1788 or www.thalian.org.

12/4–6 Holiday Flea at BAC
3–9 p.m. (Friday); 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Saturday); 12–5 p.m. (Sunday). Find vintage, retro and up-cycled treasures. Local food trucks and cash bar onsite. Admission: $5 (includes raffle ticket). Brooklyn Arts Center, 516 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-2939 or www.brooklynartsnc.com.

12/4–6 Enchanted Airlie
5–7 p.m. & 7–9 p.m. Half-mile self-guided stroll through the gardens featuring festive lights, music and spectacular holiday displays. Also runs December 10–13 & 16–22. Tickets must be pre-purchased. Admission: $12–27. Airlie Gardens, 300 Airlie Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7700 or www.airliegardens.org.

12/4–6 Holiday Market
6–9 p.m. (Friday); 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. (Saturday); 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Sunday). Over one hundred vendors selling gifts, home décor and gourmet food. Admission: $25 (Sip & Shop); $7 (general). Cape Fear Academy, 3900 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 620-2222 or www.cfaholidaymarket.org.

12/4–6 Dinner Theatre
7 p.m. (Friday & Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). *Trailer Park Christmas*. Also runs 12/11–13 & 12/18–20. Admission: $22–40. TheatreNOW, 19 South Tenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-3669 or www.theatrewilmington.com.

12/5 Battleship Alive
8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Costumed interpreters provide insight into the daily life of the crew aboard the USS North Carolina. Admission: $6–14. Battleship NC, 1 Battleship Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-5797 or www.battleshipnc.com.

12/5 Kids Holiday Workshop
10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Cookie decorating workshop for kids; part of the Bread & Lights Festival. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

12/5 150th Anniversary
10 a.m. – 4 p.m. "We Kept Our Courage Up." Living history actors, lectures and cannon firings commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Fort Fisher. Free. Fort Fisher State Historic Site, 1610 Fort Fisher Boulevard South, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-5538 or www.nchistoricsites.org.

12/5 Island of Lights Flotilla
6 p.m. Fishing boats and pleasure vessels decorated with lights. Free. Yacht Basin & Marina, 216 Canal Drive, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-2011 or www.pleasureislandoflights.com.

12/5 Wilmington Fur Ball
6:30–10 p.m. Black tie celebration/fundraiser featuring hors d'oeuvres, wine, beer and champagne, live music, dancing, and live and silent auctions. Admission: $95. Proceeds benefit Pender Humane Society, Adopt an Angel, and the Wilmington Fur Ball Foundation. Audi Cape Fear, 255 Old Eastwood Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 274-8953 or wilmingtonfurball.com.

12/5 Christmas Concert
7 p.m. Barbershop-style concert featuring the Cape Fear Chordsmen. Temple Baptist Church, 1801 Market Street,

Wilmington. Info: (910) 799-8325 or www.templebaptist.us.

12/5 & 6 Old Wilmington by Candlelight
4–8 p.m. (Saturday); 2–5 p.m. (Sunday). Tour beautifully decorated private homes, churches and historic sites in downtown Wilmington. Admission: $30. Proceeds benefit the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society. Latimer House, 126 South Third Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-0492 or www.lcfhs.org.

12/5 & 6 Live Theater
7–9 p.m. (Saturday); 3–5 p.m. (Sunday). *A Carolina Nutcracker.* Classic nutcracker magic with a local, historical twist: the play is set in Wilmington's own Bellamy Mansion. Admission: $15–30. CFCC Humanities & Fine Arts Center, 200 Hanover Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 622-8545 or cfcc.edu.

12/5 & 6 Christmas Concert
7:30 p.m. (Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). The Sea Notes Choral Society's annual Christmas concert, directed by Larry Reinhart and accompanied by Jane Boberg. Free. BCC Odell Williamson Auditorium, 50 College Road NE, Bolivia. Info: (910) 620-6275 or www.seanotes.com.

12/6 Aniwave Festival
10 a.m. – 8 p.m. Anime and Japanese cultural convention. Admission: $10-15. Wilmington Convention Center, 515 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: aniwave.org.

12/6 Menorah Lighting
4 p.m. Annual Chanukkah menorah lighting featuring Rabbi Paul from the Temple of Israel. Middleton Park, 4700 East Oak Island Drive, Oak Island. Info: lizsaller@yahoo.com.

12/6 Lantern Floating Ceremony
4–7 p.m. Lantern floating ceremony in the museum pond, which concludes the Bread & Lights Festival. Lanterns for sale at $10 each. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

12/6 City Holiday Parade
4:55 p.m. Join local community groups, schools, bands and businesses for a festive procession through historic downtown Wilmington. North Front Street & Walnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 341-4602 or www.wilmingtonrecreation.com.

12/7 English Tea
11 a.m. & 2 p.m. Proper English tea in the mansion parlors. Admission: $37.45. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-3700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

12/7 Holiday Concert
7 p.m. The New Horizons Band, directed by John LaCognata. UNCW Kenan Auditorium, 515 Wagoner Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3500 or www.newhorizonsmusic.org.

12/7 Word Weavers
7–9 p.m. Christian writers' group meeting. Life Point Church, 3534 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 619-7344 or sondradron@bellsouth.net.

12/7–10 Holiday Poinsettia Sale
10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Poinsettias available in mini, large, creamy white or traditional red. Pre-paid ordering available online. Proceeds benefit the Ability Garden's programs in New Hanover County. NHC Arboretum, 6206 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7660 or arboretum.nhcgov.com.

12/8 Duck Program
9–10:30 a.m. Learn about various area ducks. Free. Wild Bird & Garden, 105 East Brown Street, Southport. Info: (910) 457-9453 or www.wildbirdgardeninc.com.

12/8 Holiday Open House
10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Gift shops discounts, seasonal refreshments, decorations and live entertainment by the Murray Middle School Jazz Band. Free. Fort Fisher State Historic Site, 1610 Fort Fisher Boulevard South, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-5538 or www.nchistoricsites.org.

12/8 Good Friends Luncheon
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Festive luncheon/fundraiser to benefit Good Friends of Wilmington. Wilmington Convention Center, 515 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: www.goodfriendsofwilmington.org/luncheon.

12/8 Jewelers' Evening
6–7:30 p.m. Learn the basics of jewelry making with noted jeweler, metalsmith and artist Mitzy Jonkheer, and create your own wearable artwork. Admission: $75. Wild Bird & Garden, 3501 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-6001 or www.wildbirdgardeninc.com.

12/8 Vendor Christmas Party
7–10 p.m. Wilmington Weddings and Events celebrates the end of the year and 2015 wedding season with a Christmas party featuring local vendors and a cash bar. Brooklyn Arts Center, 516 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-2939 or www.brooklynartsnc.com.

12/9 Airlie Bird Hike
8 a.m. Join Wild Bird & Garden for a bird hike at Airlie. Admission: $5–9. Airlie Gardens, 300 Airlie Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7564 or www.airliegardens.org.

12/9 Live Music at BAC
7:30 p.m. Dawes (folk rock) plus Hiss Golden Messenger (folk duo). Admission: $25. Brooklyn Arts Center, 516 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-2939 or www.brooklynartsnc.com.

12/9 Sketch Comedy
8 p.m. Pineapple-Shaped Lamps pull out all the stops for their last sketch comedy show of the year with returning host Ed Wagenseller. Admission: $5. TheatreNOW, 19 South Tenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-3669 or www.pineappleshapedlamps.org.

12/10–20 Live Theater
7:30 p.m. (Thursday – Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). *Mame.* Admission: $15–30. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

12/10–20 Live Theater
7 p.m. (Thursday through Saturday); 2 p.m. (Saturday and Sunday) *A Christmas Carol.* Also runs Monday, December 21, at 7 p.m. Admission: $25. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

12/11 12 Tastes of Christmas
7 p.m. Holiday tasting party featuring twelve food and drink pairings by local restaurants, music and more. Admission: $30. Proceeds benefit Cape Fear Literacy Council. Brooklyn Arts Center, 516 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-2939 or www.brooklynartsnc.com.

12/11 & 12 Holly Jolly Holiday Stroll
Inaugural holiday event featuring street musicians, local choral groups, a window decorating contest and visit from Santa. Free. Historic Downtown Wilmington. Info: (910) 763-7349 or www.wilmingtondowntown.com/events/holly-jolly-holiday-stroll.

12/11 & 12 Holiday Concert
7 p.m. Coastal Carolina Christmas. Friday: Carols by the Wilmington Boys Choir and selections from Handel's *Messiah* by the Choir of St. Paul's, soloists and chamber orchestra, followed by a Sparkling Chocolate Reception. Saturday: Cabaret performance with Al DiMarco plus appetizer and beverage reception. Admission: $25. St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 16 North Sixteenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-4578 or www.spechurch.com.

12/11–13 Holiday Musical
7:30 p.m. (Friday & Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). *Nuncrackers: The Nunsense Christmas Musical* written by Dan Goggin. Also runs December 18–20. Brunswick Little Theatre, 8068 River Road SE, Southport. Info: (910) 470-5652 or www.brunswicklittletheatre.com.

12/11–13 Dinner Theatre
7 p.m. (Friday & Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). *A Trailer Park Christmas.* Admission: $22–40. TheatreNOW, 19 South Tenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-3669 or www.theatrewilmington.com.

12/12 Race for Life
8 a.m. William H Craig 5K celebration race for Girls on the Run, Heart & Sole, and STRIDE participants. Admission: $15–25. Legion Stadium, 2221 Carolina Beach Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-9622 or www.nckidsrun.org.

12/12 Jingle Bell Run
9 a.m. Holiday 5K through Wrightsville Beach. Costumes encouraged. Pets welcome. Admission: $15–30. Proceeds benefit the Wrightsville Beach Museum. Wrightsville Beach Museum, 303 West Salisbury Street, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 232-7532 or www.wbmuseum.com.

12/12 Holiday Bazaar
9 a.m. – 12 p.m. Girl Scout Troop 1324 hosts a holiday bazaar featuring homemade craft shopping, bake sale, a Polar Express reading, face painting and cake walk. Canned food items will be collected. Admission: $2–4. Moose Lodge, 4610 Carolina Beach Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 520-7020.

12/12 Duck Program
9:15–10:30 a.m. Learn about various area ducks. Free. Temptations Everyday Gourmet, 3501 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-6001 or www.wildbirdgardeninc.com.

12/12 Toy Science Saturday
10 a.m., 11 a.m. & 12 p.m. Kids can experiment with historic toys, investigate the inventive process, and create their own toy. Parental participation required. Admission: $5–8. Cape Fear Museum, 814 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-4350 or www.capefearmuseum.com.

12/12 Authors Book Fair
11 a.m. – 3 p.m. New Hanover County Public Library invites readers to meet writers. NHC Main Library, 201 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-6323 or www.nhclibrary.org.

12/12 Museum School Showcase
1–4 p.m. Meet the Museum School instructors and learn about upcoming classes and workshops. Includes art demos and refreshments. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

12/12 Music Discovery
3 p.m. Music Discovery with the North Carolina Symphony. Free. Main Library, 201 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-6353 or www.nhclibrary.org.

Meet

Ashley Roseboro

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Ashley Roseboro '04 is just one example of the successes that began here at GC.

Ashley heads his own pubic affairs firm, the Roseboro Group, and is also director of operations for the Bonner Group, Washington, D.C. Ashley oversees the Bonner Group's finances, human resources and legal responsibilities. He cultivated that expertise at GC.

"If it weren't for Greensboro College I would not have had the opportunity to run organizations such as student government where I learned how to create and manage an organizational budget, interact with the important donors that help fund our education, and many of the other business principals that I use in my career," he says. "Greensboro College wasn't only an institution of learning, it was where I sharpened the skills I use today."

Ashley Roseboro...unmistakeably and uniquely Greensboro College.

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12/12 NC Symphony Holiday Pops
3:30 & 7:30 p.m. The North Carolina Symphony performs holiday classics. Admission: $26–71. CFCC Humanities & Fine Arts Center, 200 Hanover Street, Wilmington. Info: (877) 627-6724 or cfcc.edu/capefearstage.

12/12 Christmas Stroll
4–7 p.m. Candlelit stroll through historic downtown Wilmington with music, period costumes, petting zoo and refreshments. Includes Bellamy Mansion, St. James Episcopal Church and Burwin-Wright House. Admission: $20. Info: (910) 251-3700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

12/12 Holiday Tour of Homes
4–9 p.m. Self-guided tour through some of Pleasure Island's most beautiful homes, all decked out for the holidays. Atlanta Avenue & South Lake Park Boulevard, Carolina Beach. Info: www.pleasureislandoflights.com.

12/12 & 19 Santa by the Sea
5–8 p.m. Watch Santa and friends dive alongside the sharks at the aquarium and enjoy holiday crafts, games, story time and more. Children receive a complimentary photo with Santa. Admission: $15–18. NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher, 900 Loggerhead Road, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8257 or www.ncaquariums.com/fortfisher.

12/13 Jazz Brunch
12–2 p.m. Sunday jazz brunch with the Nina Repeta Trio. Admission: $15–20. TheatreNOW, 19 South Tenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-3669 or theatrewilmington.com.

12/13 18th Century Christmas
1 p.m. Explore how the American colonists celebrated Christmas with a guided tour of St. Philips Anglican Church and historic Brunswick. Includes costumed interpreters, refreshments, traditional games, period crafts and an authentic candlelit service. Free. Fort Anderson State Historic Site, 8884 St. Philip's Road SE, Winnabow. Info: (910) 371-6613 or www.nchistoricsites.org.

12/13 Holiday Salon
4 – 6 p.m. Celebrate the Season of Light with delectables from King George's Kensington Palace, Marie Antoinette's Versailles, and Frederick the Great's Prussian Court, paired with a selection of the royals' favorite sonatas, diversions, airs and dances. Tickets: $65; $50/members. The Graystone Inn, 100 South Third Street, Wilmington. Info: (330) 204-9733. Tickets: cmwreservations@gmail.com.

12/17 Birding Trail Hike
8 a.m. – 12 p.m. Two-mile hike along the Greenfield Lake area of the NC Birding Trail. Admission: $10. Halyburton Park, 4099 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 341-0075 or www.halyburtonpark.com.

12/17 Holiday Concert
7:30 p.m. The Annie Moses Band. Admission: $10–29. BCC Odell Williamson Auditorium, 50 College Road NW, Bolivia. Info: (910) 755-7416 or www.bccowa.com.

12/18 Concerts on College
7 p.m. Lessons & Carols. The Girls Choir of Wilmington perform Celtic selections, Moravian songs, a Hebrew piece, the Huron carol and John Rutter favorites. Wesley Memorial UMC, 1401 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 791-4092 or www.welcometowesley.com.

12/18–20 Seaglass Salvage Market
9 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Friday & Saturday); 12–5 p.m. (Sunday). Indoor/outdoor market filled with up-cycled, recycled and repurposed furniture and home décor items. Location: 1987 Andrew Jackson Highway, Leland. Info: www.seaglasssalvagemarket.com.

12/19 Holiday Nature Crafts
9 a.m. – 12 p.m. Make festive crafts with items from nature. Admission: $5. Halyburton Park, 4099 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 341-0075 or www.halyburtonpark.com.

12/19 Fundraiser Concert
7:30 p.m. L Shape Lot hosts their fourth Annual Toys for Tots Fundraiser with special guest Rebekah Todd & The Odyssey. Tickets: $10. Brooklyn Arts Center, 516 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-2939 or www.brooklynartsnc.com.

12/19 & 20 Christmas Cabaret
6 p.m. (Saturday); 12 p.m. (Sunday). Christmas Cabaret by Opera House Theatre Company with prix fixe dinner or brunch and cocktails. Admission: $60. Blockade Runner Beach Resort, 275 Waynick Boulevard, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 256-2251.

12/22 Holiday Film Screening
7 p.m. Special screening of Frank Capra's iconic holiday film *It's A Wonderful Life*. Admission: $10. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

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12/27 Sacred Harp Singing
1:30 p.m. (beginners); 2–4 p.m. A cappella social singing. Free; donations appreciated. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

12/27 SkyQuest
1:30, 2:15, 3 & 3:45 p.m. Explore the cosmos, take a virtual tour of the stars, view planetary objects, discover the mythology in our constellations, and learn to be a backyard astronomer. Admission: $5–8. Cape Fear Museum, 814 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-4362 or www.capefearmuseum.com.

12/30 Racial Justice Program
11 a.m. – 1 p.m. "What's Wrong With Different?" teaches children to value, appreciate and respect the differences between people. Pre-registration required; space limited to 25 participants per program. Suitable for children ages 7–10. Cape Fear Museum, 814 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-4382 or www.capefearmuseum.com.

12/31 New Year's Eve Bacchanalia
6 & 9:30 p.m. Four-course meal with contemporary variety show. Party favors and champagne toast included. Admission: $85. TheatreNOW, 19 South Tenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-3669 or www.theatrewilmington.com.

12/31 New Year's Eve Gala
7 p.m. Fundraiser/celebration featuring dinner, drinks, dessert, champagne toast and a live performance of *Memphis* by Cape Fear Theatre Arts. Admission: $125. Proceeds benefit Thalian Hall Center for the Performing Arts, Inc. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

12/31 New Year's Cruise
8 p.m. – 1:30 a.m. Ring in the New Year aboard *Henrietta III*. Includes heavy appetizers, live entertainment, party favors and a champagne toast. Admission: $90. Cape Fear Riverboats, 101 South Water Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-1611 or www.cfrboats.com.

12/31 New Year's Eve Gala
8 p.m. Fundraiser/celebration featuring heavy hors d'oeuvres, a complimentary drink, champagne toast and cash bar. Admission: $60. Proceeds benefit the New Hanover Regional Medical Center Rehabilitation Hospital. Beau Rivage Golf & Resort, 649 Rivage Promenade, Wilmington. Info: (910) 392-9021.

12/31 New Year's Celebration
9 p.m. DJ, dancing, raffle, food, fireworks and a giant lighted beach ball drop at midnight. Free. Carolina Beach Boardwalk, Cape Fear Boulevard, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 470-2024 or www.pleasureislandoflights.com.

January 2016

1/2 New Year's Romp
9 a.m. Kick off your New Year's resolution with a 10K or 5K fitness walk or run. Admission: $30–35. Proceeds benefit Communities in Schools Cape Fear. Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-1901 or www.ciscapefear.org/new-years-romp.

1/8 & 9 Dinner Theatre
7 p.m. *The Lambda*. Set at a gay bar on the Carolina Beach Boardwalk in the late 1970s, this play explores the lives of its patrons. Admission: $20–34. TheatreNOW, 19 South Tenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-3669 or www.theatrewilmington.com.

1/9 Rip the Runway
6 p.m. Fashion show/fundraiser for the Lillie Ann Heggins Scholarship Fund. Features local DJs, designers, stylists, models and area retailers. UNCW Kenan Auditorium, 601 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: www.portcityriptherunway.com.

1/10 Hidden Battleship
12–4:30 p.m. Behind-the-scenes tour of the un-restored areas of the battleship. Admission: $45–50. Battleship NC, 1 Battleship Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-5797 or www.battleshipnc.com.

1/10 Winter Bridal Expo
12–3 p.m. Carolina Wedding Guide presents the finest wedding vendors in the Cape Fear area. Wilmington Convention Center, 515 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 259-8323 or www.carolinaweddingguide.com.

1/13 Live Music at BAC
8 p.m. California-based reggae band Rebelution. New Kingston opens. Admission: $25–35. Brooklyn Arts Center, 516 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-2939 or www.brooklynartsnc.com.

1/14 Jazz at the CAM
6:30–8 p.m. Serena Wiley and The Light Under the Sun. Admission: $5–12. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

1/15 & 16 StriperFest
6 p.m. Auction and Banquet (Friday): Bid on vacation and local restaurant packages,

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boating equipment and art while enjoying dinner, drinks and live music. Tickets: $60. On Saturday, events begin at 9 a.m. with a one-of-a-kind Tag and Release Striped Bass Fishing Tournament. Proceeds benefit fishery restoration. Coastline Convention Center, 503 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-5606 or www.capefearriverwatch.org.

1/15–17 Seaglass Salvage Market
9 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Friday & Saturday); 12–5 p.m. (Sunday). Indoor/outdoor market filled with up-cycled, recycled and repurposed furniture and home décor items. Location: 1987 Andrew Jackson Highway, Leland. Info: www.seaglasssalvagemarket.com.

1/16 Courtyards & Cobblestones
4–8 p.m. A creative wedding event that features seven fully styled venues and a hand-picked collection of the most innovative, creative wedding professionals from Southeastern North Carolina. Various venues in downtown Wilmington. Info: www.courtyardsandcobblestones.com.

1/19 NC Symphony Concert
7:30 p.m. Brahms' Tragic Overture; Andrew Norman's Suspend; Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5, "Emperor." David Glover conducts; Inon Barnatan on piano. Pre-concert talk begins at 6:20 p.m. Admission: $20–70. CFCC Humanities & Fine Arts Center, 200 Hanover Street, Wilmington. Info: (877) 627-6724 or cfcc.edu/capefearstage.

WEEKLY HAPPENINGS

Monday – Wednesday Cinematique
7 p.m. Independent, classic and foreign films screened in historic Thalian Hall. Admission: $7. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info/Tickets: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

Tuesday Wine Tasting
6–8 p.m. Free wine tasting hosted by a wine professional plus wine and small plate specials all night. Free. The Fortunate Glass, 29 South Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-4292 or www.fortunateglasswinebar.com.

Tuesday Cape Fear Blues Jam
8 p.m. A unique gathering of the area's finest Blues musicians. Bring your instrument and join the fun. No cover charge. The Rusty Nail, 1310 South Fifth Avenue. Info: (910) 251-1888 or www.capefearblues.org.

Wednesday T'ai Chi at CAM
12:30–1:30 p.m. Qigong (Practicing the Breath of Life) with Martha Gregory. Admission: $5–8. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

Wednesday Classical Guitar
5:30–7:30 p.m. Rob Nathanson at CAM Café. 12/9, 12/16 & 12/23. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

Wednesday Wednesday Echo
7:30–11:30 p.m. Weekly singer/songwriter open mic night. All genres welcome. Palm Room, 11 East Salisbury Street, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 509-3040.

Wednesday Group Meditation
6:15–7:15 p.m. Guided energy clearing meditation for Self Discovery (12/2) and Healing Overwhelm (12/9). Exchange: $15. All Love Healing Center, 3951-A Market Street, Wilmington. Info: www.allovehealing.com.

Thursday Yoga at the CAM
12–1 p.m. Open to beginner and experienced participants. Admission: $5–8. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

Friday Christmas by the Sea
8 p.m. Family-friendly holiday activities on the boardwalk. Ends 12/31. Boardwalk, Carolina Beach Avenue, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-8434 or www.carolinabeach.org.

Friday – Sunday Holiday Train Expo
6–9 p.m. (Friday); 1–6 p.m. (Saturday & Sunday). HO, O and G scale model railroads plus Polar Express photo op with Santa. Runs through 12/27. Admission: $4–5. Salt Shaker Building, 705 South Kerr Avenue, Wilmington. Info: www.capefearmodelrailroadclub.org.

Saturday Holiday Elf Camp
9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Guilt-free holiday shopping for parents while the kids (ages 5–12) enjoy a fun and educational program at the aquarium. Includes pizza lunch, snacks, crafts and gift-wrap. Ends 12/19. Admission: $45–50. NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher, 900 Loggerhead Road, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-6812 or www.ncaquariums.com.

To add a calendar event, please contact Ashley at ashley@saltmagazinenc.com. Events must be submitted by the first of the month, one month prior to the event.

Port City People

Opening Gala

Cape Fear Community College
Humanities & Fine Arts Center
Saturday, October 3, 2015
Photographs by Bill Ritenour

Bob & Carol Seitz,
Bob Jones, Peggy Sloan

Andy & Lisa Almeter

Debbie & Jerry Smith
Mark Alper & Janet Epstein

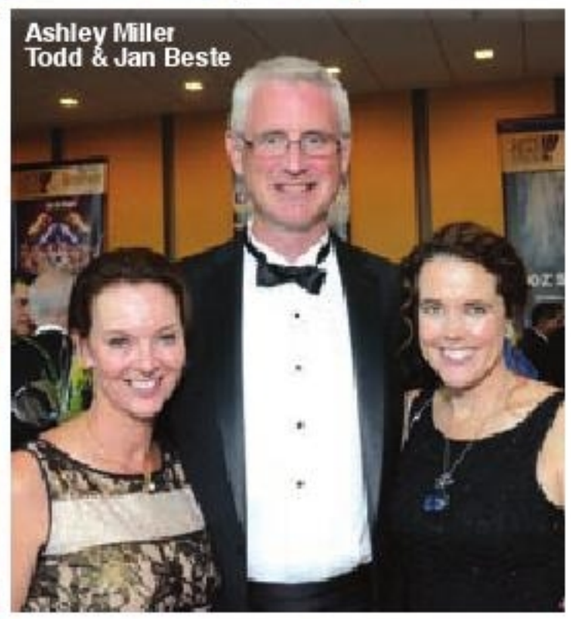
Vivian Parlier Burnett & Julian Burnett

Connie & Philip Brown

Margaret Stargell,
Sandy Spiers,
Frances Weller

Thomas & Julia Gore,
Graham Smith

Alison & John Farmer
Lynn & Ellen Tucker


Ashley Miller
Todd & Jan Beste

Lisa & Josh Dobstaff,
Lannin & Michael Braddock,
William & Ashley Carmichael

Laura & Heath Miller

Ashley & Jason Wheeler

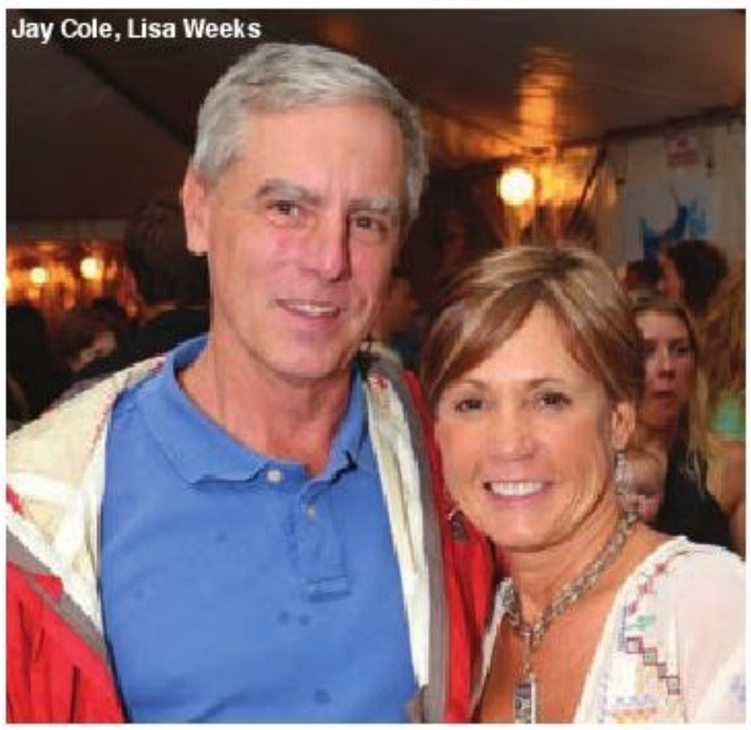
Port City People

4th Annual Taste of Wrightsville Beach
Hosted by the Wrightsville Beach Foundation & Marine Max

Saturday, October 10, 2015

Photographs by Bill Ritenour

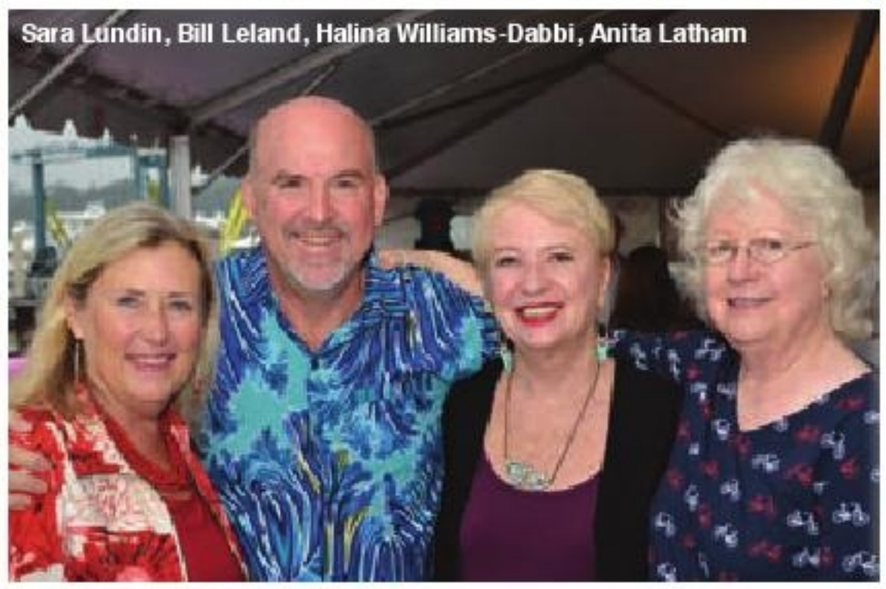
Scott & Brittany Douglas


Jay Cole, Lisa Weeks

Scott & Melissa Bovit

Sharon Laney, Myra Webb, Jackie Whitaker

JT & Beth Tulip, Jay & Brandi Hessenius


Sara Lundin, Bill Leland, Halina Williams-Dabbi, Anita Latham

Brian & Holly Hastings, Heather & Josh Glover

Brent Poteat

Ryan & Jenny Glass

Kasey & Stu Werner

Michelle Cox, Lisa Spencer, Jane Cox

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Port City People

Haint Blue All Hallows Masquerade

Poplar Grove Plantation

Saturday, October 24, 2015

Photographs by Bill Ritenour

Frank Albenese, Sandy Coen

Lori Kirpatrick, Felicia Greene

David and Kim Saunders
Kim and Joe Kingery

Tricia & Jim Lancaster

Greg & Marsha Haynes

Brian & Lynn Caveness
Amanda & John Fonvielle

Chad & Denise Heye

Chip & Marlene Murphy

John & Marge Moran

Gary &
Jerri Dale

Katherine Miessner, Carla Stanley

Mark & Kim Clements,
Donna & William Lawhorn

Sherry Brink

Kelly & Robert
Newbry

Diane Hastell

Port City People

The Willie Stargell Auction, Dinner and Dance

Country Club of Landfall

Saturday, November 7, 2015

Photographs by Bill Ritenour

Stephen & Nicole Golf, Nicole & Grant Psomas

Margaret Stargell, James Chappell III

Sheila & Jon Evans

Aric Boyd, Jennifer Addis, Tracy Dean, Heidi Drueppel

Dr. Jonathon & Elle Woods

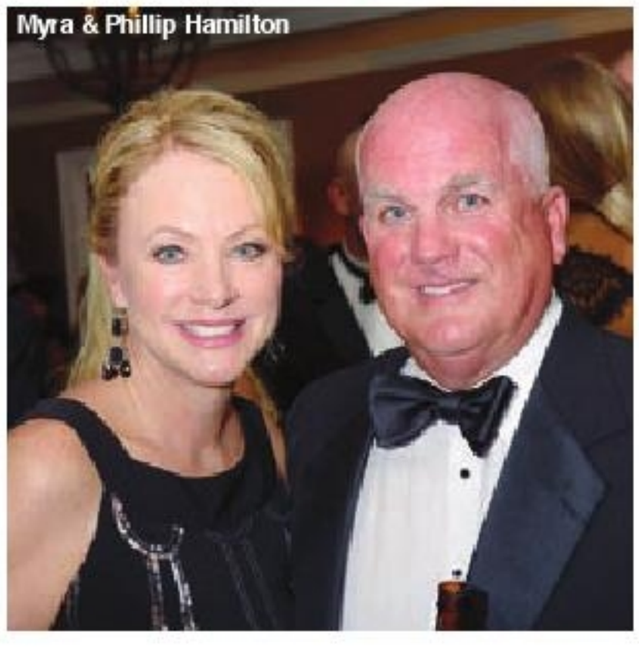
Vivian Jones, Damon Surriatt

Kelli Stargell, Rory Hall, Geanine Thompson

Katie & Jason Swain

Amela & David Sutton

Dana Fisher, Bob Odom, Ashley Miller, Mary Duke Barnhill


Myra & Phillip Hamilton

Russ Rogers, John Davis

Lift a Toast and Drink the Punch

December's stars

By Astrid Stellanova

Children, I just love the holidays! The Stellanovas celebrate it all: Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Festivus. Ain't no casserole, matzo ball, jujube, ham, turkey or sweet tater safe when our brood gets together. Grandpa Hornblower likes to say that if its and buts were candies and nuts, every day would be like Christmas. Well, indecision ain't exactly a gift. But good humor is. Give yourself some, Star Children. Being happy, as the elders said, is a way of becoming wise. See you in 2016, older and wiser! —Ad Astra

Sagittarius (November 22–December 21)

You may have been naughty January till November, but Darling, you are not nearly so dumb as to be a major pain in the run-up to your birthday and Christmas. Everybody is relieved that you found at least part of what you have been searching for, and nobody expected it. You have never had much sense of direction, but at least you can find your car at Walmart. That's something, Honey.

Capricorn (December 22–January 19)

Looks like somebody drank a big ole cup of Hater-ade. But two wrongs finally made a right for you, so just count your blessings and tell the universe thank you. You are one of the few signs that can look good while tipsy, wearing your birthday suit with a giant bow stuck on your head. Just be sure it ain't on YouTube.

Aquarius (January 20–February 18)

About the only time you were outstanding this month was when everybody else went inside for eggnog and cookies. Time to get your game face on and make happy, happier, happiest. Go on. Drink the punch; smile for the camera. Tell Grandma you love the socks. It won't kill you, Sweet Thing.

Pisces (February 19–March 20)

Use the good sense the Lord gave you and take you a BC Powder when that co-worker drives you mad. Maybe he chews with his mouth open or doesn't understand the concept of an inside voice, but he's somebody's baby. If you can teach by example, you are going to have a much better year, Honey.

Aries (March 21–April 19)

There was a time in the not-so-distant past when you were the last to leave the party. Thank heavens you have learned some self-control and have started getting off the train before it stops at Stupid Land. I see you're growing up, wising up, my Ram. Put a bow on that thought and see if you can't keep the lamp shade off your wild and crazy little head.

Taurus (April 20–May 20)

The holidays bring out the best in you. You help everybody enjoy the festivities just a little more than they would without you. That's a gift to everybody, Love. Just remember, when you walk in the door nobody wants to leave — that may not make it onto your tombstone, but it is what everybody will remember!

Gemini (May 21–June 20)

If I could grant you one wish, it would be a do-over. Somebody needs your love and forgiveness. Maybe you can offer it. You have a bigger heart than you admit, you wacky little Twin. Green is your color — goes with your birthstone, and goes with all those greenbacks coming your way.

Cancer (June 21–July 22)

For the next two astral cycles, you have got some choices to make. Will you stay? Will you go? Will you go back to bed and pull the covers over your head until it's February? Honey, you have got to trust your gut. If it don't feel right, it ain't right.

Leo (July 23–August 22)

Time was that you could name every one of the seven dwarfs. Now you feel like you have become three of them: Grumpy, Sleepy and Dopey. Smile more. Sleep more when you crawl into those sheets. And don't say as much as your moving lips want to, Honey. You'll look Happy, Perky and Smart.

Virgo (August 23–September 22)

You did some heavy lifting and all you got in thanks was a hernia. No more gut-busting heroics for you. Time out is just about the best cure, and you will be visited by the Good Deed Fairy at least once this month. Kick back and allow, Love Muffin.

Libra (September 23–October 22)

Somebody fooled you once but they didn't fool you twice. You were on to their ways, and now you feel all chuffed up. If you must seek revenge, re-gift Grandma's fruitcake and move on, Baby. Be jolly; you look younger and cuter that way.

Scorpio (October 23–November 21)

By the time you read this, you will have launched headlong into your annual holiday excess. That's all right; some people (ahem, you and me) just love glitter porn. Tie a bow on it and call it your season. It is.

For years, Astrid Stellanova owned and operated Curl Up and Dye Beauty Salon in the boondocks of North Carolina until arthritic fingers and her popular astrological readings provoked a new career path.

Like Father, Like Son

Neither is ready for cotillion class

By Clyde Edgerton

About a half-century ago

I was an escort at a debutante ball in Durham and at another in New Bern. I knew that the young women I escorted were being introduced into society. I remember that the word "cotillion" was somehow associated with the event.

About a year ago I learned that a nephew (age 13) up in the Triangle was involved in cotillion. He'd be learning good manners at the dinner table, on the dance floor, and in social situations, etc. No problem.

About two months ago I learned from my wife that my 10-year-old son would soon be taking a cotillion class. No problem.

About three weeks ago I discover that I am supposed to — in an hour — take my 10-year-old son to his first cotillion class. I learned this from a note my wife left on the kitchen table. I had an hour to prepare him and get us something to eat and then go to cotillion class. No problem.

I look at the instruction sheet. He is required to wear khaki pants, shirt and tie, dress shoes, and a navy blue blazer. He and I go through his closet. We find shoes, pants, shirt and tie, but no navy blue blazer — Nor any other sport coat that fits him. We go to his older brother's closet, where we find a navy blue blazer, but it's too big.

I call my wife. She says go to Once Upon A Child (clothing for children) and buy a blazer. No problem — we have forty-five minutes — for shopping and dinner.

At Once Upon A Child we find a blazer that is too big and one that's too small. The one that's too small looks so funny on him I take a photo with my iPhone. Then we find a sports jacket "of sorts" with shiny navy blue stripes over a navy background. He is trying to button the jacket but the buttons are too big for the button holes. Getting desperate, I pull out my Leatherman pocket tool, open the small knife and open all eight holes to a larger size — yes, eight holes. It's kind of a long sport coat. It doesn't look right.

"What do you think?" I ask.

"I don't think so," he says.

"I agree," I say as I place the jacket back on the rack. "But time is running out and we have to get something to eat. You're going to have to go without a jacket."

"OK," he says. He seems unconcerned.

I'm worried about him being the only one in class without the required blue blazer.

We leave the clothing store and do drive-through at Chick-fil-A. The class is across town and I don't want to be late. I visualize him walking in late without a coat. Being on time without a coat won't be quite as bad.

As we drive away from Chick-fil-A, he places a French fry on his knee. I tell him it might leave a grease spot. He removes it. Across town, we miss our turn-off. I do a U-turn and make it to the parking lot outside class with five minutes to spare. I take the key from the ignition and look at him as he opens the passenger door. I say, "Son, you're going to have to tuck in your shirt-tail."

His feet are on the ground — and his car door is open. He turns and looks at me over his shoulder and says — and he is as sincere as a judge: "What does that mean?"

I explain, get out, come around to his side and demonstrate as I tuck in my own shirt-tail.

Inside, I'm wondering why I'm getting funny looks. I mean . . . I realize I'm wearing my very old jeans and my striped shirt with the cigar ash burn hole in front. Humm. I pull the cotillion instruction brochure from my back pocket, open it up. I find something like this: "Fathers bringing students to cotillion class should dress appropriately with coat and tie." Yikes.

Then I figure I'm just what they need. I can almost hear it: "Son, see that man over there. One reason you get training here in cotillion is so you won't go out in public looking like that."

My son took the whole event in stride. Afterward he told me it wasn't as bad as he'd thought it would be. We go back again in a few weeks. Or rather, he and his mother go back. I'm guessing they voted me out.

Clyde Edgerton is the author of ten novels, a memoir and a new work, Papadaddy's Book for New Fathers. *He is the Thomas S. Kenan III Distinguished Professor of Creative Writing at UNCW.*

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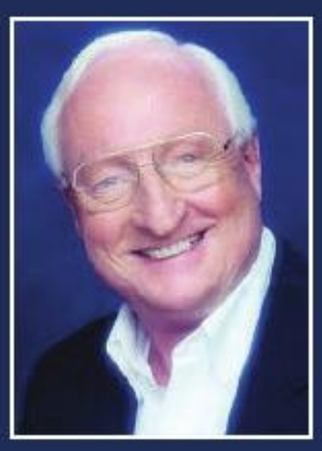

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